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No. 114.

SPIRIT OF THE SPRING.

BY A. F. M., JR.

Ushered through a port of bloom,
To smile upon earth's budding bowers,
See the mystic Spirit come
With dews of balm and scented showers!—
Spirit of the Spring!—the Spring!
Oh! shape of beauty garbed in joy;
Softly kissing,
Ever blessing,
Hail to the welcome face of Spring!
So beautiful and yet so coy.
Peris in the air above,
Pouring sweets upon the wind;
Rose-cups steeped in draughts of love;
Songs of birds of countless kind;
Tinted flowers; grasses green;
Vespers of a heavenly choir;
Carols trilling,
Fusion-filling,
Hail to the goddess of the green,
Who charms us with her wand and lyre!
Hear the music in grove and vale,
Amid the leaflet canopies!
Hark to the brooklet's marmured tale
As it laughs with the passing breeze!
Ecstasies of pensive dreams,
Sylvan trysts and gnomish tricks,
Muse inspiring,
Bosoms ringing,
Hail! creator of lovely dreams,
Bright as a glance from angel eyes!
Wake! Wake! from our icy sleep—
Wake to the Season of green and gold!
Welcome her in the sky deep,
Live life fresher within her mold—
A gorgeous mold!—so mild and sweet,
Gushing in glories bright and clear,
Melting sadness
Into gladness,
Wake to our joy! and voiceful greet
The happiest Season of the year!

Without Mercy: OR, THREADS OF PURE GOLD. A TALE OF TWO CONTINENTS.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL,
AUTHOR OF "IN THE WEB," "OUT IN THE WORLD,"
"LAURA'S PERIL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I. ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

TWENTY years ago Holcombe Hall was the most ancient and picturesque residence in the parish of St. James, if not the finest in the whole State of Louisiana. Some time in the last decade of the last century, Pellisse Gaspard, a Spanish noble, falling into disfavor at court, escaped the gallies by flying across the Pyrenees to France, and thence to Louisiana. His appetite for routs and gay scenes had become thoroughly sated at Madrid, and on his arrival in the New World, he betook himself to this lonely spot on the bank of the broad, sweeping Mississippi, and built a new home.

Being his own architect, the structure, as a consequence, partook of the gloomy massiveness of the half-Spanish, half-Moorish piles that are to be seen on every hand in Granada.

There was a long hall of granite, the windows of which were small and filled with diamond-shaped panes; a square tower on the right of the main entrance lifted its battlemented head full twenty feet from the red-tiled roof, and in this tower—which Gaspard named after his child Rupert—hung a chime of deep-sounding bells. The sole business of these bells was to chronicle the holidays in the calendar, ringing out merry music on feasts and dolefully knelling the fasts. The interior was finished in polished oak, the lower rooms being inlaid with cedar, and the ceilings frescoed in the most elaborate manner by a master hand.

When Pellisse Gaspard died, in 1693, he left his immense plantation to his son, without reservation; stipulating, however, in his will, that the old mansion should not be torn down under any circumstances, and that the bells in Rupert's Tower should not only ring out the fasts and feasts of the church in all the future years as they had done in the past, but that, on the last day of every succeeding October—that being All Souls' Day—they should be tolled from noon until midnight.

After his father's death, Rupert Gaspard leased the homestead, for the period of fifty years, to an Englishman named Harold Holcombe, who agreed to never touch or attempt to remodel the place, and to see to it that the bells were rung according to the wish expressed in old Pellisse's will.

Where Rupert went no one could tell, not even the new tenant, for sixteen years had been sending to his attorney in New Orleans the rental of the place.

If Pellisse Gaspard was an odd man, his English successor was more eccentric still. Of the five hundred acres that stretched up and down the river, three hundred were covered with stubble and forest trees, the vegetation being so dense that it was only with great difficulty one could make his way through it.

A dozen slaves cultivated—in a sort of a way at least—the remaining two hundred; but over all the plantation brooded the spirit of neglect. Rank weeds and wild-flowers fringed the path leading to the river, and half-decayed vines clambered up the sides of the Hall and swayed like funeral mourning from the dark masonry of the tower, while a group of red oaks, all draped in skeins and webs of dark moss, almost shut out Holcombe Hall from the river-view.

When Harold Holcombe first settled here, he was a tall, handsome man of eight and thirty, or thereabouts, but sixteen years silvered his long hair and plowed his swarthy cheek with many a furrow, so that



He gasped for breath; his passion, wild and uncontrolled at all times, was choking him.

he looked fully ten years older than he really was.

There were but two white persons on the place besides himself. One of these was Tom Toy, his confidential servant and secretary, and the other—a sweet, gentle girl of seventeen—was called Hester Corwin. She had gray eyes, large, full and wondering; lips, red and dewy as the heart of a rose; a mass of silken brown hair, and a lithe, slender, girlish figure, which gave promise of matchless grace in riper years.

Harold called her his niece, but the Har- graves, on the next plantation, thought she was a nearer kin, since his whole existence seemed to be wrapt up in her, while old Mima, the colored housekeeper, used to shake her head when she saw the old man fondle little Hester, and say: "Lor' help us; dis am de queerest, queerest w'ld. Day's no tellin' what am comin' roun'. Not a bit—no tellin'—no indeedy—not a bit."

Hester had just returned from a Northern boarding-school, where she had spent the greater part of two years, and now she began to realize how silent and gloomy her former life at Holcombe Hall had been.

All the dreary hours of this October day she had sat up in her little bandbox of a room, looking out at the swollen Mississippi, while the warm rain beat an even tattoo on her window, and the red oaks dripped, and the moss hung limp, and the gray fog curtained in every thing.

She felt lonesome. The house was so still, and her thoughts would, despite her, fly longingly back to her schoolmates. And then, finally, she fell to dreaming—as girls just on the threshold of life will dream, and plan, and wonder what the future has in store for them.

"I would so like to go back to school," she said to herself, "and see all the folks again. But then—" and she checked herself suddenly. "Uncle Holcombe would be so lonesome without me, he says, and, I shouldn't be so selfish."

The grayish twilight was stealing down from the wet sky, and creeping over the wet earth, and there were bright lights

gleaming from the distant negro-quarters, and red and green lights gleaming from the smoke-stack of a passing steamer.

"It's getting dark up here," she said, as the steamer disappeared in the fog, "and I must go down and see what uncle is doing. Perhaps he is as lonely as I am."

She arose as she said this, and drawing down the blinds to shut out the uncertain light, she tripped down the dark stairs. At the foot of the hall she met Mima, the ebony face of whom was glistening with tears.

"Wha hev ye bin, honey chile?" asked the poor old negress.

"Up in my room, Auntie," was the reply.

"But, what's the matter? you're crying!"

"Yes, I know it, honey; but we all got a shock jist now, chile. De ole man has got one uv his fits ag'in. He's awful bad. I nebber seen him so bad like. Yes, Missah Hess, when 'Lijah called me in, I 'ot dot de lief was done gone, sah."

Hester did not wait for any more, but, pushing by Mima, rushed into the library.

The old man, who was lying on a lounge before the fire, was trembling from head to foot as if with ague; his eyes were closed tight, and his teeth, long and white, were buried in his ashen nether lip, from which a red drop of blood oozed out upon his white cravat.

Tom Toy stood over him, bathing his wrists in camphor, and brushing back his thin white hair with a caressing motion.

"Hush—sh, Miss!" he said, turning to Hester and putting his finger upon his lip. "He'll be all right now, in a minute or so. Keep quiet; he's a-comin' to again."

"Oh, Mr. Toy! has he been very ill?" Is there any danger?"

"No, no danger," replied Toy, without looking up. "And I've seen him a hundred times worse; but he's bad enough not to be bothered, Miss." Then after an instant he continued, looking into the face of Hester, who had fallen upon her knees by the side of the couch. "It won't do him any good to see you here now."

"Why?" and there was wonderment in the girl's face as she put the query.

"Well, because—because—"

The old man turned suddenly, opened his eyes, and exclaimed:

"She is here again! I saw her pointing at me as she did on that terrible night—"

"Mr. Holcombe! Mr. Holcombe!" cried Toy, in alarm; "don't go on in that way. Perhaps he is as lonely as I am."

Miss Hester's here. Remember Miss Hester is at your side!"

Old Harold's face became whiter still, and his great large eyes stared up into Toy's.

"Here? Here did you say, Tom?" he muttered. "Where? where did you say Hester was?"

"At your side, uncle," answered the girl, creeping closer to the questioner, and taking one of his burning hands between both of hers.

The caress was so tender, so shy, so much like Hester, that the half-unconscious old man recognized her at once.

"Darling, you have just come in, have you not?" he asked, rising upon one elbow and brushing his thin gray hairs out of his eyes with his disengaged hand.

"Yes," she replied. "Mima told me you were ill."

Harold looked up at Toy, as if for confirmation of this, and the latter stammered out:

"I told you she was here as soon as she came. There was nothing passed."

This was said in a mysterious way, that sounded oddly, even to the young girl, who now began to think there was a secret between master and man, of which she was not only not cognizant, but of which she was to be kept in profound ignorance, for some reason or another, and this thought amounted almost to a conviction when old Harold knit his brows and scowled Toy into silence.

"Well, no matter; I'm better now," and old Harold Holcombe waved his hand at Toy. "You can go, Tom."

The latter obeyed with alacrity, going off on tiptoe, and turning at the door to return Mr. Holcombe's formal bow.

The most rigid etiquette was observed at Holcombe Hall.

CHAPTER II.

THE HEIRS.

WHEN Toy's footsteps had completely died away, Harold turned to Hester, and taking her pretty face between his wrinkled, nervous palms, gazed mutely into its beauty for a moment. Then he drew a long sigh of relief and said:

"Hester, my child, do you know how old you are?"

"Yes, sir," with eyes cast shyly down.

"How old, then?"

"Seventeen, aunt Mima says."

The old man knit his brows. "How came she to speak of your age?"

"She told me when I came home from school."

"Ah!" Another pause. "Did she say any thing else?"

"About what?"

"Well, any thing; about your coming here, or about your—your—hesitating—"

"your mother."

"Nothing; only she said Ma was a pretty woman, and that I looked like her some," with a blush.

"And that was all, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Hester, you must not talk with Mima. As you know, she is beneath you; she is your slave. You should remember that you are the heiress of Holcombe Hall, and that confidential conversations should only be held with those who are socially your equal."

"But I was not—"

"There, there! I was only advising, not scolding you; therefore you need not trouble yourself with going into a defense of your conduct. But, you are now seventeen, and quite a young woman. It is time you should be thinking of settling in life."

The girl glanced coyly up, but did not speak, and Harold continued:

"You have often heard me speaking of your cousin Tracy, have you not?"

"Yes, sir," with a deepening blush.

"Well, his father having died penniless, in London, some five years ago, I ordered the boy to be sent to Eton to complete his education. He is now twenty-three, and my heir. Do you comprehend me?"

"Not exactly, sir."

Well, to be more explicit, my estates in Lincolnshire must not pass out of the family; therefore it is my wish, and it has been my cherished dream, for years and years, to marry you to Tracy. You will thus become my joint heirs, and I can die happy when I see the only two beings I love on this wide earth so united."

Hester's heart gave a wild bound, not of joy, nor of sorrow either, but of surprise. This was such a sudden revelation; and she had never thought of marriage, except in that vague way in which young girls think of such things. To grow to womanhood and marry somebody or another appeared to her a part of her destiny, and she fancied, foolish thing, that she could no more escape the latter than she could prevent the former. But, now, she remembered all the nice things Tracy was reported to have said about her in his letters to his uncle, and then the thought, that he might fancy her a great deal handsomer than she really was, came to her like a flash, and she said:

"But, uncle, cousin Tracy may not—"

She stopped suddenly, and cast her eyes upon the floor.

"May not what? May not come home, do you mean? There need be no fear of that. I have sent for him, and the next steamer up the Mississippi may bring him here. Anyway, my child, a fortnight at the furthest will bring you face to face."

"But," said Hester, interrupting him, "he may not like me when he does come, and I—"

"May not like him, eh? Is that what you would say? I supposed so. I expected some such foolish speech; girls' heads nowadays are filled with such ridiculous moonshine and nonsense." His face was livid as he continued: "I have my heart too firmly, deeply, set on this matter to permit the foolish whims of either you or Tracy to upset me. If you both make up your minds, however, to hate each other at first sight, of course you have a perfect right to do so, but it will be all the worse for him. I'll make him bear a part of my burden—I'll—"

He gasped for breath; his passion, wild and uncontrolled at all times, was choking him.

"Will I go to my room, uncle?" asked the girl, in dismay, and anxious to be alone with her thoughts.

There was no reply for a moment. Then, with an effort, Harold said:

"You will forgive me; I speak too harshly to you, I know, but I have built all my hopes on this union, my child—all my hopes, and it's a terrible thing to have the labor of ten years blasted by a single breath. Don't you think so?"

"Yes," in a very low voice.

"But," he added, coaxingly, "you will not make up your mind to hate him, will you? You will try to love your cousin—for—for my sake?"

She wound her arms tight about his neck, and said, "I will try."

He kissed her cheek, and muttered to himself, "If Annette were living now, she might forgive me, but the dead have no mercy, no mercy."

The rain splashing against the panes; the wind moaning among the trees; and the beating of that old man's heart, was all that could be heard, until Toy crossed the threshold, and said:



"If you please, master, tea is waiting."
"Very good, Toy. We'll go now."
The servant withdrew, and Harold added, "We are going to be better friends than ever, Hester. Will you give me your hand on that?"

She gave him both, with a child's impetuous confidence, and leaning on his arm, they sauntered off to the supper-room.
It was a ceremonious meal. Harold sat at the head of the table, which glittered with polished silver. Hester occupied a place at his right, and Toy flitted back and forth from the sideboard with the gravity of a justice wielding his baton for the first time. Very little was said, although the meal lasted nearly an hour, and when it was over, Harold returned to the library and Hester escaped to her chamber.

Once there, she sat down in the darkness, close to the window, and began to wonder what sort of a man this Tracy Cuthbert was; whether he was good and kind, or wicked and harsh; and then, too, she fell into speculating on his appearance. After an hour or two spent in this way, she knelt down and prayed devoutly, and then crept into bed.

Tracy Cuthbert was in her mind until she fell asleep, and long after too, for she dreamed of him all through the night. He had arrived at the Hall; they had met at the foot of the path, close to the river's brink; he was tall and handsome, and he kissed her tenderly on the cheek when they met, and promised to make her whole life one continuous round of happiness.

She awakened at this, and the cold gray light of day dissolved her rosy vision, as the morning sun drives before its beams the yellow mists.

CHAPTER III. BEYOND THE ATLANTIC.

A LITTLE English seaport, with a long line of chalky cliffs flanking it on the north and east; a low pier, falling into the sea, jutting out into the Channel, and a wide expanse of waters stretching off toward France. Three dozen houses—all plain, even to severity—and one wide, unpaved street, that began at the pier and ended in the high grass beneath the cliffs. This was all—and the all was called Digby.

It might have been more; indeed, most people, fifty years ago, thought it would be a place of great maritime importance; but the engineers who planned the railway from Dover to London thought otherwise, and therefore failed to raise Digby into distinction by making it what all its inhabitants had fondly hoped it would some day become—the terminus of a great line.

But, notwithstanding this disappointment, happy persons were to be found in the gray old town, and none more so than sweet Dora Linfield, the rector's daughter, as she tore open a London letter and glanced at the familiar handwriting through her tears.

"Oh, he's coming down," she cried, kissing the letter, "to tell me something of importance!"

Her mother, knitting by the window, raised her eyes in surprise, and asked:

"Who is coming down?"
"Why, Tracy Cuthbert, to be sure!" and saying this, Dora sped away to a little cosy room in the highest part of the rectory, where she took the letter from its temporary hiding-place in her bosom, and read it over, again and again.

Tracy Cuthbert would have envied that blue sheet of imperial note had he seen how it was pressed to Dora's red lips and held up against her eyes, where the glad tears were shining like pearls on the long, silken, fringe-like lashes.

Of course they were lovers; had been devoted to each other ever since Tracy met Dora one sunlit day at Margate and saved her from falling down the great staircase, by catching her in his arms. This introduction was followed by a visit, the next spring, to Digby, where Tracy remained long enough to read Virgil with the rector, and Ovid with his charming child.

It was a peculiar love affair, taking it altogether, for everybody seemed satisfied, and the young couple were intensely happy.
"And now, I do wonder what's bringing him down?" mused the girl. "He did not expect to get off from London until Hallow Eve. Perhaps—" and here she stopped to think, biting the corners of the letter, by way of assuaging her memory, or because she did not know what she was doing.

Before she could work out the conjecture there was a tap at the door, and in response to her invitation her father, a quiet, grave man, with blue eyes like her own, and auburn hair combed meekly away from his forehead, entered.

"My child," he began, "your mother informs me that Mr. Tracy Cuthbert proposes paying us a visit, and that you have received a letter notifying us of the fact."

He reached out his hand for the note. Dora blushed. There were things in that letter, as there doubtless are in all love missives, that she would much prefer keeping a secret from every eye, but she could not deny that serene matter-of-fact demand, and so gave it to him.

He took out his glasses with the greatest deliberation, rubbed them with a piece of chamois, he always carried for the purpose, and, after carefully adjusting them, opened the letter with what Dora thought a very cold air indeed, and began to read.

There was not the slightest trace of emotion on his face as he read; had the four pages been blank he could not have maintained a more stolid exterior. It really seemed as if he had expected to find just what he had found.

"You can see Hannah, and have the spare room fitted up for his reception," was all he said, as he handed the letter back to her.

Then he took off his glasses, folded them in the chamois, and, putting them away, turned upon his heel and left the room.

Mr. Linfield was known far and wide as a very methodic man, and he deserved the reputation.

The afternoon of the next day saw Tracy Cuthbert's arrival at Digby Rectory. He was a dark, bronzed, stately fellow, not pretty, but handsome and manly-looking.

After the first outburst of welcome, and Tracy had detailed, for Mr. Linfield's benefit, the latest London gossip, he was about to propose a walk on the beach with Dora, which Mr. Linfield anticipated by saying:

"This visit was rather impromptu, was it not?"

Tracy's eyes fell. He remembered now the purpose of his mission, and glancing at Dora, he answered:

"My uncle, Harold, whose heir, as you know, I expect to be—has sent from America for me."

"But, you are not going?" put in Dora.
"I must. To disobey him would be to blight all my prospects."

"And that," said Mr. Linfield, tapping his silver snuff-box, "would be a great calamity. I understand your uncle is very wealthy."

"Yes, I believe he is reputed to be a planter of means; besides, when he left England, seventeen years ago, he was quite rich," said Tracy; and then, as if anxious to change the subject, he added: "Dora, what do you say to a walk to the pier?"

"But when do you leave us?" asked Mr. Linfield.

"A fortnight hence."

"So soon!" exclaimed Mrs. Linfield, with a touch of sadness in her voice, while Dora tried, but could not speak.

"Going so soon as that, eh?" and the rector lifted his eyebrows with an effort, by way of expressing his surprise.

Dora was at the door now—out in the slanting afternoon sunbeams, and they were crowning her head with a golden glory.
"Tracy had never seen her look so beautiful, neither had he ever seen her look so sad."

When he had joined her it was with a pleasant word, but she could not trust herself to reply, and then a silence fell upon them, that was not broken until they had walked out on the deserted pier, and Dora had gazed far to the western horizon for quite a long while. Poor girl; she was trying to penetrate the misty veil, trying to catch a glimpse of that new world that was soon to rob her of the being that was dearest on earth to her.

"Well, darling," said Tracy, anxious to break the silence, "have you nothing to say to me?"

She looked up, made an effort to speak, but instead, broke into tears, and, holding her hands in his own, looked away toward the cliffs, and for fully five minutes not a word was said by either.

"Parting is very painful work," he ventured to say, at last, "but our parting will not be for a great while, darling. A few months and I will come back for you."

"But, something may prevent your return. You know America is a great way off, and the ocean appears to me like a barrier that is very hard to overcome."

"That is but a fancy," he returned. "You have seen ships sail out of Digby a hundred times, and yet each time return. I would as soon be in America as Calais or Dieppe."

"Why so? Dieppe and Calais are but two days' journey; America is at the other end of the world!"

"Ay, true enough; but, when separated at all, there might as well be leagues intervening as miles. Don't you think so?"

"I'm sure I can't. If I knew you were in Calais I would not feel so lonesome; I see vessels from Calais every now and then, but those from America go to Southampton and never pass here at all. Digby, you know, is not a cheerful place to wait for any one's return. There is no bustle; no excitements, as in London, or even in Dover, and I know I shall die of sheer loneliness when—when" her voice was dying into a whisper, "when you are gone."

He made no direct reply; only pressed her hands more firmly, and set his teeth hard to prevent his lips from twitching.

Finally, they both sat down upon the old pier, the sun went out of sight, and the grayish twilight came on, and faded out into misty amber; then the moon sailed up out of the waves, and looked shyly down upon them.

At last Tracy said, after a long silence: "Dora, there is no use disguising the fact; this is a world of change, and accidents may happen the best of us."

She nestled closer in his arms, but did not reply.

"I may never see England again, or, for that matter, America either. The ocean is paved with wanderers."

She shuddered. "I know it," she replied. "Oh, it's so terrible!"

"Were such a fate to be mine," he continued, "I have an idea that it would be less hard to bear if I left one behind me on whom I would have a stronger claim than that of lover. Do you understand me, Dora?"

"I don't know—I think I do."

"Then, to be plain, darling, I would have you for my wife before we separate. Do you consent?"

She did, without speaking, but he understood her as well as if she had spoken; indeed, much better, for her yielding was unconditional, as all silent consents are.

A week passed, and, one evening, at its close, there was a quiet little wedding in the stiff, solemn-looking parlor of Digby Rectory.

The contracting parties were Tracy Cuthbert and the rector's daughter, Dora, and the witnesses consisted of Justice Pernal, the dignitary of Digby, and a half-dozen of the most prominent shopkeepers of the town.

There was very little display, in fact, no attempt at it whatever, and when the pair had been declared man and wife by the faltering, half-broken voice of the rector, and Mrs. Linfield had kissed Dora a half-dozen times, and everybody, including Justice Pernal, had congratulated them, a delightful, delicious supper followed, and the affair was over.

The next day Tracy bade his young wife adieu.

"You will write as soon as you land," she said.

"I shall write on the way and mail it on my arrival. Good-by!"

She made a great effort to utter that little word, but it stuck in her throat, and, instead of saying "good-by," she faintly:

"Poor child! Could she have but seen what the merciless future had in store for her!"

(To be continued.)

Expression in the Eyebrows.—The eyebrows are a part of the face comparatively but little noticed, though in disclosing the real sentiments of the mind scarcely any other features of the face can come into competition. In vain the most prudent female imposes silence on her tongue; in vain she tries to compose her face and eyes; a single movement of the eyebrows instantly discloses what is passing in her soul. Placed upon the skin, and attached to muscles which move them in every direction, the eyebrows are obedient, in consequence of their extreme mobility, to the slightest internal impulses. There majesty, pride, vanity, severity, kindness, the dull and gloomy passions, and the passions soft and gay, are alternately depicted.

Hercules, the Hunchback: OR, The Fire-Fiends of Chicago.

A REVELATION OF THE GREAT CONFLAGRATION.

BY A. F. MORRIS, JR.
AUTHOR OF "PLANNING TALKMAN," "HOODWINKED," "BLACK CRESCENT," "BLACK HAND," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII. JOSE HAS AN OBJECT.

MIGUEL assisted his captain to rise, and, in the passage of a second, was dragging him away.

Jose breathed hard. He was, evidently, in great pain; yet, with the other's aid, he managed to escape before the Hunchback discovered who it was he held in his savage grip.

"By the saints!" exclaimed Miguel, "that man has near killed you!"

"Do you know him?"

"Know him! How should I?"

"Yet you have seen him often."

"No."

"Yes—in New Orleans."

"Ah!"

"It was Carl Grand."

"May he die by the rope! I'll have his blood for this, captain!"

"Faster, Miguel; that cursed dwarf may still be in pursuit of us!"

"El?—high!" and Miguel glanced uneasily back to see if Hercules was after them, while a shiver passed over his bulky frame.

As they passed into, and turned northward along Morgan street, the bulky asked:

"Where are you hit? As I live, my hand is red with blood! You are bleeding badly!"

"No matter—hasten."

"But you will die, captain! Cospita! if you die, I am ruined—I can do nothing without you!"

"Come on."

"But this wound?"

"I am stanching it with my handkerchief. Cease your bother."

Jose was ill-humored. Besides his pain from the wound, he was disappointed greatly at having lost the boy, Carl; and the two combined to force a vent of snappishness.

Miguel suddenly paused on the corner at Randolph street.

"Look, now," he cried; "there's a crazy woman. See! what a fright! A she-devil, with her hair broken, as I live! Can we not pick her pockets?"

Jose looked and saw a female drawing near, swinging her arms, laughing, making faces at those who were hurrying past her.

She was not the only case of insanity on the streets of Chicago during that dread night; and while many gazed in silent awe upon the poor creature, some sickening at the ghastly sight she presented, none dreamed of the cause of her condition—none imagined how she received that fearful gash across the temple, where the plaster was nearly torn off, and clots of blood disfigured a face that once was beautiful as colored statuary.

The woman was Hermoine. She held a roll of MS. in one hand, waving it over her head occasionally; alternately chattering in an incoherent manner, and roaming aimlessly along, seeming to enjoy the excitement around her, and glancing carelessly at the lurid heavens.

Jose Moreno knew her even in her horrible disguise. He was, for a moment, dumb in astonishment; then he grasped Miguel by the arm and whispered, quickly:

"It is Hermoine Greville!"

"No!" returned Miguel, amazed at the announcement.

"I would know her in a worse guise than that!"

"Devils! I know her, too, now."

Jose suddenly threw off the other's hold, and advanced toward her.

She saw him approaching and paused, contemplating him.

"Lady," he said.

"Lady?" she repeated. "Why, that isn't my name. Don't you know me? They call me Satanella."

"Satanella, then," acquiesced Jose.

"Where are you going?"

"Going? How funny," musingly. "Do you know, I was on a mission of some kind—but I have forgotten. What will my father say? Ha! ha! ha! Well, I don't care." Then, abruptly, "Who are you?"

"I can tell you what your mission is," evaded Jose.

"Can you? How opportune! That's good—well, tell me."

"You are seeking some one."

"Am I? I don't know. Where is he? Is it a man?"

"Yes, a man. His name is Evard."

"Evard? Evard?" repeated the maniac, half-aloud. "I have heard that name somewhere. I guess you must be right. See here—I've a message for him."

She held up the papers.

"Would you go to him?" Jose inquired, gently.

"Yes; let us find him. You will show me the way?"

"I will. Come—take my arm."

"Your arm? Oh, yes! Ha! ha! ha! I didn't think. Come ahead, now."

She slid her arm in his, and he led her slowly away.

Hermoine became silent as they moved along, looking down at her feet, and unconscious of the steadfast gaze which Jose was fixing on her bowed head—a gaze that, at times, wandered to the papers she held, as though the Spaniard longed to possess himself of them.

And in his mind he was saying:

"If you knew what those documents contained, Della Rivers, you would eat them sooner than carry them about. And I must have them at all hazards!"

For he had recognized the black ribbon, and black seal, and knew well the contents of the MS.

Miguel, who had been attentively watching the movements of his captain, stood staring vacantly after the couple.

"Now, may his infernal majesty make a dessert of my carcass! If that is Hermoine Greville, she is crazy! What does the captain want with Hermoine Greville? Where would he take her? Cospita!—is he crazy?"

He followed after them, wondering afresh with every step.

Jose led his companion a long walk. When he paused, it was before a two-story house of neat appearance.

A woman was standing in the doorway, looking up at the fire-lit sky. As we come closer, we see that she is an Indian crone of withered form and time-worn countenance.

Her piercing eyes bent upon the comers, and she was about to speak; but Jose made a sign, which she understood, for she stepped aside and allowed them to pass.

"Who is that queer woman?" asked Hermoine, as they entered.

"A friend to both of us," answered Jose. "Go on, my Satanella; we will soon find him whom you seek."

"What's this?" hissed the crone, in his ear, while Hermoine was advancing, and casting curious glances about her.

"The woman who calls herself Hermoine Greville," he replied, in a quick, low tone. "Give me the best room in your house—the safest for a prison. Henry and I will pay you roundly."

"I can't give you the best. Trix lies in the best, half-burned to death, and with a head of bruises."

"Ha! how happened it? what has the boy been at?"

"He tried to avenge his mother, and failed—but, see, the woman is watching us. Follow me."

"Come, Satanella," Jose said, turning to Hermoine, "this way, and we'll soon find your lover."

"Lover? I have no lover—stop!—yes I have—one. But he went out a little while ago. I must hasten home again. He is back by this time—"

"No; come this way."

"I can't, I tell you. I must go home to meet my lover. Show me out."

He seized her by the arm as she took a step toward the door.

"But you must!"

"Who says 'must' to me?" demanded the maniac. "Let go."

"Come, come; you can go in a few moments. I won't keep you."

"Sure?" hesitatingly.

"Yes."

"Well, I'll trust you. I must make haste with my errand, though. I wonder what I am to do when I see him?"

They were ascending the stairs behind the Indian crone.

"You go first," Hermoine paused short as she spoke.

Jose did as she wished; but he was watching her closely.

As they passed around the landing on the stairway, a black slouch-hat appeared at the parlor door. The hat was followed by a bearded face, and two blue eyes gazed after the trio.

Whas Miguel.

When the front door was banged in the Spaniard's face, he immediately sought the parlor window, and, with the systematic celerity of a burglar—as he was—here gained ingress to the house, determined not to lose sight of his captain.

And there was another form, small, elastic, shadowy, that dodged hither and thither close behind Miguel.

CHAPTER XIV. JACK WILLIS SAYS "HALT!"

It was a pale, haggard face that looked in upon Zone from the green bough, where the small circle of light from the lamp fell in a weird halo.

As she uttered the surprised exclamation, the face vanished, and its owner slid quickly to the ground—scaling the garden wall, and disappearing in the gloom.

Zone roused herself. Her first action was to seize the lamp and start in pursuit of Hermoine, grasping the poniard, and determined to get back the papers, of which she had been robbed.

But she was foiled. While searching for the maniac—rushing through nearly every room in the large house, the object of her search glided out into the street and fled from the scene.

"Della Rivers!" she cried, madly, "bring back those papers."

But she called in vain.

Then, disappointed, chagrined, angered beyond all control, she returned to the parlor, and broke forth, hissing, as she paced to and fro:

"Gone!—lost! And I had it in my hand! Have I forgotten how to use my poniard? Have I become a mere child, that I should be thwarted so easily? 'Death! If I but had her here now, I'd—'" completing the sentence with a stamp of her foot, a gritting of the pearly teeth, and clenching her fist till the flesh grew led beneath the nails.

Quicker grew the steps across the carpet; more excited heaved her bosom, as it told of the mastering emotions within her.

Then she paused.

"It will never do for me to remain here! I have not time to restore things to rights in the library—and Carl Grand may be here at any moment. O-h! to think that I should have the prize snatched from my very hand!"

In coming to the house of Evard Greville, she had turned her cape—which was black on the wrong side—and wrapped it about her head, thus concealing the fact that she wore a mask. Going to the door, she paused to draw the cape closely over her, and then sped away, going westward.

As she went, she was uttering to herself:

"I have seen Evard Greville—the true Evard Greville! Or have my eyes deceived me? No; no, I am too wide awake in my anger! But I'll be even with you yet, Della Rivers!"

The owner of the face which had appeared at the library window of Evard Greville's house continued on, after making his exit from the garden, until he reached a saloon in a retired section, whose exterior was dim, dirty, desolate-looking.

Our character entered by a side-door, to a room where several chairs and tables, and a rickety counter, constituted the make-up of a card-crib, with poorly-stocked bar, and dingy atmosphere.

The chairs were deserted; all who had been there—comprising roughs and liquor-swillers—having turned out, during the earlier part of the great fire, for questionable purposes.

But the keeper of the saloon was on hand; more careful of his business than to desert it on this, his favorite night.

By the aid of a sputtering lamp, we see that the solitary comer is clad in threadbare cloth, with bursted shoes and torn hat. Yet beneath that hat—which he pushed back as he advanced to the counter—there was a pale, handsome face, with high, broad brow, piercing eyes, and lips of firm compression.

He called for a drink; and while the man was setting out the liquor, he looked down, long and hard, at the ragged note he was about to spend.

"My last cent!" he uttered, slowly. "The last I own in the world; while there are others who drink from golden goblets, and spend their cash freely—my cash! But it won't be for long; no—ha! ha!—well, I'll soon spoil their enjoyment, that's all."

Paying for his drink, he retired gloomily to a seat.

It is time Jack Willis was here," glancing at a clock, which ticked, with a dismal voice, against a beam-dark wall. "He said he would follow immediately, and meet me here to-night. Ah! he is a shrewd fellow, Jack is. How fortunate that I happened across him! But what can detain him?"—with another impatient glance at the clock.

Now, the diminutive man with the carpet-bag was the identical Jack Willis referred to by the gloomy young man who sat in the out-of-the-way saloon.

Jack Willis was a detective—a Chicagoan by birth; a sharp, active member of the S. S., with a reputation of worth well merited by his admirable abilities.

A few years prior to this eventful night

spinning to one side, knocked senseless, perhaps killed outright.

It was no time to hesitate. The negress seized the cart, and, placing Mortimer Gascon in it, pushed ahead; while she glanced back, at times, upon the great maelstrom of fire which was engulfing the city.

She was soon out of danger from the dread element. But a new peril threatened; she had lost considerable blood, and began to feel a sleepy exhaustion. To sink down now, was to court death, either by being trampled on, or perishing when the flames, at last, rushed upon the spot.

Hers was a strong nature, however, and with that nature she fought the treacherous weakness off.

After traversing a number of blocks—anon speaking encouragingly to her charge, who was in an extremely nervous condition, Lu called to a boy who was tearing past them.

"Here!" she cried, "push this cart for me, and I'll pay you five dollars."

Even this urchin was keenly alert for business contracts, for he demurred: "Five dollars? That ain't enough. Gi' me ten."

"Ten, then. Take hold, quickly."

"Gi' me the money first."

When he had received the price of his services in advance, the boy grasped the cross-piece of the cart and started off briskly, Lu following close behind him.

Suddenly, she stood still, and glanced at a two-story house on her left.

There was a man in the doorway—just in his rear, the bent form of an old woman; and the first one was calling out:

"Ho, Miguel! where are you? Come here."

The eyes of the negress glowed like living coals.

"It is Jose Moreno!" she muttered, breathing hard, while her veins warmed.

"He must have given Hurl the slip. And he has the boy. Little Carl is in that house. I must get him back again."

But she remembered that she was not alone. She wheeled about, to stay the boy who was in her employ. He was gone.

While she was gazing anxiously around her, the door of the house banged shut.

"I have lost him. Curse that boy! why didn't he halt when I did? But, I can't find Mortimer Gascon now; no use in hunting. He is gone for to-night, anyhow. May the Lord look after him!"

As she concluded, she advanced to the narrow alley at the side of the house, bent on recovering the lost child.

The gate was open, and she entered. A dog, threatening snarl, greeted her; a large dog, made toward her.

The cellar entrance was at her side. To escape the hungry teeth of the brute, she fled down this, closing the door after her—the fierce jaws coming together with a loud snap, as the animal tried to bite her disappearing hand.

The boy who was pushing Mortimer Gascon before him in the cart, had seen the negress pause, but thought she would soon overtake him.

Not until he had turned several corners, did he realize that she was no longer with him.

He could not go back—or would not, though Gascon strove to bribe him with a liberal offer.

Then, becoming involved with the crowd on Randolph street, a fear for his personal safety took possession of him, and he fled, leaving the helpless invalid directly in front of a lumbering wagon.

"Git out of that, or I'll mash you!" screeched the man in the wagon, as he cranked his neck over a bundle of dry-goods.

Gascon threw up his arms imploringly, and cried, in faint tones:

"I can not; I'm sick and exhausted! Turn aside!"

"Nary a turn!" with a jerk of the reins. "Gee up, hey! If you don't git, I'll run you down, by gum!"

A little figure rushed forward when the hooked wagon-tongue was almost crashing into the frail conveyance, and a pair of red-gloved hands drew him out of danger.

"This is fortunate, Mortimer Gascon! I was just in time."

It was Zane. She started ahead with the current of men, horses, vehicles; while he thanked her from his heart, for her providential coming.

"Stop! Stop!" cried a voice in their rear. "Zone! Mortimer Gascon! Hold, there, I say!"

She paused. In another moment Hercules, the Hunchback, was with them; and his first words were:

"God be praised! I feared the worst had befallen you, Mortimer Gascon. But where is Lu? Speak—where is she?"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 110.)

Madeleine's Marriage:

on

THE HEIR OF BROADHURST.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLIOT,

AUTHOR OF "UNDER THE CLOUD."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE DOUBLE CRIME.

By afternoon of the following day all was arranged between the mother and daughter. The carriage was to take her to the station, where Frank had promised to join her; and to avert suspicion, should Marlitt Clermont chance to call at the house, her mother was not to accompany her. Julius, the footman, would go with the carriage, and return with tidings of her safety. She was to proceed in the night train to the station nearest Mrs. Byrne's residence, where a fly could easily be procured, to take her to the house.

As soon as she was married, her mother would join her at Broadhurst, and then they could arrange the matter of their future residence.

Madeleine was anxious to have her child in a place of safety, for she knew Marlitt well enough to dread him, and felt assured he would scruple at no means to prevent Oriel's marriage with her lover, and to compel her to take the husband he had chosen for her. She knew him to be dark, scheming and relentless, and trembled lest he should interfere to tear her child from her arms.

Not knowing how far the law would sanction his proceedings, she was the more in fear of him. With her own hands she did what little packing was necessary, not forgetting a bridal dress of rich white silk, and a veil of point lace; for she would not have the fair girl omit any such proprieties on the occasion so important to her.

Oriel laughed as she saw the delicate

fabric wrapped in cambric, and wished her mother could be at hand when she should wear it.

"Hanigan told me, mamma," she said, "that you wore deep widow's mourning when you were married."

"At my last marriage I did," replied the lady; "because your father—I had lost him so short a time before."

"And you married to secure the fortune for me," said the young girl, looking gratefully in her face.

"My child!" exclaimed her mother, "may it bring you more happiness than it ever has to me! I have been justly punished!"

"What wrong had you done, my dearest mother?"

"It was a fearful wrong, to give my vows for gold; vows never meant to be kept! Do not ask me to tell you, Oriel; some day you shall know all—that you may take warning by me not to set undue value on riches."

"You have never seemed to care for them, mamma."

"It was my craving of them that has wrecked my life—that has made me wretched."

"You shall not talk so, mother dear. When Frank and I are settled, you shall come and live with us, and we will make you happy."

The daughter's embrace was fondly returned.

"It is singular," observed Madeleine, after a pause, "that Mr. Clermont has not been here to-day. I have been in dread of a visit from him."

As she spoke, there was a ring at the door bell, and presently word was brought that "the master" was in the drawing-room.

Her heart beat tumultuously as she descended to meet him. What if he had discovered her plans, and was determined to frustrate them!

His manner was unusually courteous. He was on the eve of a journey, he said, and had called to bid her adieu, uncertain when he might return.

"When I do, Madeleine," he said, "it is my design to lead a new life. I shall eschew dissipation, and forswear gaming. If you will help me, I shall essay the part of a model husband."

She looked at him earnestly, puzzled to discover what evil design he was endeavoring to cover.

"We will go down to Broadhurst, and reside there henceforward. You are a splendid woman, Madeleine, and I have too long seemed insensible to that fact. I say seemed, for I have not been so in reality. None of the rivals you have had, reigned in my affections; but I think I could easily make a queen of you."

He drew near to her and took her hand.

She strove to withdraw it, but not with force.

"Why should you shrink from me, your husband, Madeleine? Could you never learn to love me?"

What meant this strange language from his lips. He had never before spoken in this way. She became pale as marble.

"I never wooed you, Madeleine," he said, looking in her eyes, as if he would read her soul; and you may have thought me incapable of love. I was too proud, after our singular marriage, to claim what every wife bestows of her own free will. I hoped you would also."

Madeleine drew away her hand, and moved back a pace or two.

"Is it in real aversion you shrink from me?" he asked.

"If I must speak the truth," she answered, "it is. You promised, if I would marry you to save the estate, that I should never be molested by you; that you would have another residence; that I should be your wife but in name."

"And I have kept the promise, certainly."

"You have visited me frequently, and always to extort some sacrifice, by which you could gain advantage. What is it you want now?"

"I want your love, Madeleine; I want you to be wholly my wife."

"That is impossible, sir."

"Why impossible?"

"My love was buried, years ago, in a bloody grave!" cried the unhappy woman, her eyes filling with tears. "You have no claim on that, or my wifely obedience."

"Did you not promise both at the altar?"

"With the reservation, signed and sealed by you, sir, that you required nothing of me but the nominal relation necessary to secure the property in which you have shared equally with myself."

"It was an unhallowed compact!"

"It was indeed—and has made me wretched enough! Yet I am not aware, Mr. Clermont, that I have failed in any of the duties I undertook, or that you have any reason to complain of me."

"I have not complained."

"Will you now tell me your object in this visit?"

"You persist in speaking to me in this manner, as if this house were not mine as well as yours!"

"By your own agreement, its use was relinquished to me."

"To be resumed whenever I please."

"Is it so?"

"Certainly; for I have a rightful share in all you possess."

"I will give up the house to you, then; I will leave London."

"To reside at Broadhurst, you and your daughter?"

"Perhaps. Why do you care to know?"

"Because she is my daughter as well as yours, and I claim an equal right to dispose of her. I am seeking, Madeleine, to bring you to a sense of your duty as a wife, and with your help, we can obtain from her the obedience of a daughter."

"You are mistaken, sir," said the mother, trembling with apprehension, for she could not yet perceive his drift; "Oriel owes you no obedience."

"She does; and I can exact it as her guardian. But I prefer the gentler rule of a father. I would persuade both of you, that what I demand concerns your and her happiness. Will you allow me to see her, that I may make the effort?"

"Pray excuse her," pleaded the mother. "She is not well."

"You need not fear that I shall distress her. I will be as tender of her feelings as you could be."

He rung the bell, and gave orders that the young lady should be called.

Oriel came in, after some little delay, plainly dressed, and paler than usual. Her stepfather took her hand in greeting, drew her toward him, and lightly touched her forehead with his lips. It was the first time he had ever approached even so near to a caress, and the girl shuddered and drew away her hand.

"Like mother, like daughter; both hate me," he muttered, inaudibly, and turning, he began to pace the room.

Oriel went up to her mother, and both seated themselves, hand in hand, prepared for whatever might await them.

"I have been proposing to your mother, Oriel," said Marlitt, "that we should be hereafter a united family. Our relations hitherto have caused some scandal, and have not been productive of happiness to either party. I think with your aid and example, a better condition of things might be inaugurated."

"I do not understand you, sir."

"Your mother would not allow me to see you yesterday; but to-day I come in a gentler spirit, to ask of you that which I have a right to insist on."

"What is that, sir?"

"Your obedience, my daughter; your aid in restoring a true union to this family."

"Obedience in what, sir?"

"I have received a proposal of marriage for you from young Mr. Ormsley, the banker. It is my wish that you receive it favorably."

"Indeed, sir, I can do nothing of the kind."

"You are too young, my girl, to know your own mind. You must allow those who are wiser to judge for you."

"Not in such a matter as this, Mr. Clermont."

"Can you not call me father?" he said, frowning.

"Pardon me; I meant no offense. I can not remember my father distinctly—and have never applied the name to any one else."

"But I am your father now, Oriel! and your legal guardian; and you are to submit to my judgment."

"I can not let you force a husband on me," said the girl, with spirit.

"I can prevent your marriage with another," returned the stepfather, fixing his eyes on her face, and noting the vivid blush that rose to her very forehead. "I can do that, and I will, most assuredly. Come: be reasonable. For the present I will say nothing of the other suitors; but I want you and your mother to be prepared when I return to town to accompany me to Broadhurst, where we will all hereafter reside."

The girl glanced from him to her mother in surprise, as if to ask what meant the words she heard.

"It will depend on you, if we are a happy household; and I am sure, my daughter, you would wish to promote so desirable an end. You will therefore be prepared. I had meant to be absent some time; but I will hasten my return, that we may all enter as soon as possible on our charming new life."

He rose to say adieu, crossed the room, took Madeleine's hand, and lifted it to his lips. Then he laid both his hands on Oriel's head, as if invoking a blessing, and with a graceful bow, left the room.

As the door closed on him, the young girl turned to her mother.

"Tell me, mamma, what does all this mean?"

"It means, my love, that he has some project to ruin every thing, if we do not make haste to circumvent him. He is never so soft and insinuating, except when he means to strike. I wish Frank were here. I am fearful of something happening to prevent your journey."

"Oh, mamma, what can happen? It is so short a distance before I meet him; and then all will be well."

"I trust so—I pray it may be so! But this serpent-like, gliding smoothness—it covers some deep design."

"Perhaps, dear mamma, he is really penitent for the past, and wishes to become better."

Madeleine shuddered. "I am used to reading things terrible," she said. "He is plotting something terrible."

"It can not be worse than forcing me to marry Mr. Ormsley, and that he can never do. Nor can he prevent my marriage with Frank."

"We must manage your escape to-night. Every thing depends on that. Come to my room. I will not order the carriage till the time comes, for the servants must know nothing."

In the street, Marlitt saw, at the stand, the same coachman who had taken him to his destination the evening before. He crossed the way and asked if he was engaged at half-past eight o'clock that night.

The man answered in the negative, touching his hat.

"Because I may have work for you then. Be opposite my hotel, in Conduit street, and wait for me till ten."

"Very well, sir."

"It will be a secret expedition, and your horses must be fresh. I have observed, by the way, that they are capital animals, and you drive them well."

"I am not so well used to driving that I could manage any others, sir. I have the mastery of these."

"Are they your own property?"

"Oh, no. I am only a poor soldier."

"A soldier! Where have you served, then?"

"On the Continent, in the ——— regiment, for ten years. But I left the army years ago. I have come back for good, for I made little or nothing by service."

"You are a hale and hearty fellow, and can do well yet. Serve me well, and you shall find the jobs worth undertaking. Be on hand to-night, at half-past eight, remember."

The man made a military salute in token of a promise of punctual obedience.

Marlitt walked on to the Jew's shop. Entering quietly, he found his confidant in the little back room, and they had a secret conference that lasted a couple of hours.

The night was dark, and rain fell at intervals. Mrs. Clermont had given orders to Julius to have the carriage ready a few minutes before nine, merely to drive to the railway station. She left it to be inferred that a friend was to arrive at that time, whom her daughter was to receive.

At the time appointed, the two ladies, one equipped for traveling, came down-stairs to the front door. The footman had already put the small portmanteau into the coachman's charge, and stood by the open door.

Madeleine clasped her child in a tearful embrace, invoking for her the protection and blessing of Heaven.

Oriel spoke cheerfully, and talked of their happy meeting soon, when she should be safe from peril.

Her mother went with her to the carriage steps, and saw the door closed. With injunctions to the coachman to drive carefully, she went back into the house.

No sooner had the carriage started, than that of the hackman to whom Marlitt had

spoken, followed it. Instead of taking the direct way to London Bridge, it turned toward that of Waterloo; though evidently it was not that station it was designed to reach. Oriel knew nothing of the road, and sat still, unconscious of danger.

When the carriage was very near Waterloo Bridge, the coachman appeared to have got into some altercation with the strange hackman aforesaid, who disputed the right of way. The fountain, he said, was dry, and he was going to water his horses over the river. There were but few passengers in the street.

The confusion and wrangling caused the young girl to draw the glass, and look out. As she did so, she saw two men with masks, close by the coach window. Before she had time to close it, or cry out, the door was burst open, and a pair of powerful arms seized her and dragged her from the carriage while it was still in motion.

Oriel screamed loudly for help.

The next instant her shawl was torn from her shoulders and thrown over her head—the corner being thrust into her mouth in such a manner as to gag her completely. She felt herself carried in a pair of vigorous arms, and her violent struggles only caused her to be more roughly handled.

A hoarse, unfamiliar voice bade her be quiet, or worse would befall her.

The seizure of the maiden had been effected with so little noise that Mrs. Clermont's coachman knew nothing of it, and was turning his horses to go on, after extricating himself from the strange hackman, when Julius, the footman, called to him to stop, saying the young lady had been kidnapped.

The footman had known nothing of the intended assault, and his confused ejaculations, mingled with his accusations against the Jew, were understood by no one. But several persons ran, on hearing his cries, to see what was the matter.

Meanwhile the two masked figures, bearing a burden covered by the cloak of one of them, were upon the bridge. They had evidently been forced out of their intended course.

"Confound that bawling fool!" cried one of them, under his breath; "he will bring the police on us!"

The secret passage, master!" whispered the other.

"We have passed it! We can not go back!"

"Then she must go over the bridge!"

"There is no other way! I can not help it! Quick. We have not a moment to lose!"

A splash was heard in the water, and in an instant the masked men had disappeared. All was now confusion. Julius was loudly proclaiming the assault and abduction; the police were running to and fro; a crowd was gathered, and questions were asked that obtained no answers.

The two would-be assassins, having thrown away their masks, and wrapped their faces in their cloaks, mingled with the crowd, gained the secret passage, and in a few moments were safe in the hotel where Marlitt lodged.

Neither he nor his companion spoke till they had gained his apartment and locked the door. The pretended Jew was trembling violently, and clutched at his throat, as if he already felt the hangman's rope about it.

"It could not be helped, man," said his employer, drawing a deep breath. "Self-preservation justifies any thing. We should have been discovered, or have lost our labor."

"I did not bargain for that!" muttered the other.

"Try a pull at this," and Marlitt took a flask of brandy from the sideboard, and handed it to him.

Hugh drank copiously, dispensing with a tumbler, then set down the bottle.

"Do you think she was drowned?" he asked, in a shuddering whisper.

"Not a doubt of it; the water was deep, and the river tells no tales. Now, you must get home. It is late. I expect a coach I have ordered, and shall leave London directly. Are you ready? Stop; I will ring and send to see if my man has come."

The attendant who answered the summons brought word that no coach had called for Mr. Clermont.

"Then I must send for another! It is as well. What is the matter, Hugh?"

"You must give me another couple of thousand, sir, for this unexpected job. I did not reckon on it all!"

"Well, we shall not quarrel about the pay. The way is clear before me now; but I must be off; and you had better be at home, in case of awkward questions!"

Taking his stupefied accomplice by the arm, he descended the stairs.

While the two criminals were effecting their escape from the scene of their crime, a man was forcing his way through the crowd, near Waterloo Bridge, bearing a lifeless form, dripping with water. He had just brought it from the river, having plunged in to save the victim when she was thrown from the bridge. He made his way, lighted by the lamps and torches here and there, to a hackney coach that stood near.

The pressure of persons eager to satisfy their curiosity, impeded his progress. He looked around for the Clermont carriage; it had driven off; the policemen, too, had scattered in different directions.

Calling out for help to turn his horses and place the insensible form in the hack, he answered the questions of the spectators as he best might.

They did not seem to associate the drowning with the abduction. "A woman threw herself into the water," was too common a piece of intelligence to excite much surprise.

Sanders—such was the name the man gave—was permitted to depart with his charge without efforts to ascertain who it was who had attempted self-destruction.

The hackman drove rapidly to his stables. Calling some one to take care of his horses, he lifted out the still unconscious girl, and bore her up-stairs to a loft, where he laid her on a straw bed. Then slanting to some one below, he received a supply of dry blankets, in which he proceeded to wrap her, chafing her hands and arms, and wiping the water from her hair.

In a few moments the girl opened her eyes. By the dim light she saw a dark form bending over her, and intent, apparently, on her restoration.

"Mother!" she faintly articulated.

"Here—Miss—drink a few drops. 'Twill do you good."

A flask was held to her lips. She tasted a little of the stimulant. Then recollection returned, and she started up.

Seeing a stranger, and the strange place, she strove to rise, but her strength failed, and she sunk back in a swoon.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE STRANGE HANDWRITING.

No sooner had Marlitt and his accomplice gained the street, than a carriage dashed up in front of the hotel; the door was forced open from the inside, and a woman, without bonnet or shawl, sprang out.

THOSE MERRY, LAUGHING GIRLS.

BY TOM GOULD.

On their way to school I met them.
Just before the stroke of nine—
But if ever I should miss them—
Why, my spirits would decline.
For those faces are bewitching,
All so roguish in their curls,
There's a light in every feature
Of those merry, laughing girls.

With a step so lithe and airy,
With a look that seems to say,
"We are pretty and we know it,
And we mean to have our way!"
Ah, you merry, merry bright ones,
All so roguish in your curls,
May you ever look so happy,
And be merry, laughing girls!

Eyes that always seem to twinkle
With a never-ceasing glow;
Why their faces look so happy,
It is not my lot to know.
Yet I know that all are jovious,
And without a shade of care,
Nor a shade of any color—
Save what nature painted there.

Oh, how fair is youth and beauty,
Though they linger but a while,
Ah, how short is life that's mortal,
And what moments we beguile.
Oh, that every hour of sadness
Never could be yours and mine,
Oh, that youth might ever linger
With each merry, laughing girl!

Cecil's Deceit:

THE DIAMOND LEGACY.

BY MRS. JENNIE D. BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "ADRIA, THE ADAPTED," OR, THE MYSTERY OF ALLESTREEF GARDEN, ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

TAKING UP THE THREADS.

No doubt the reader has already inferred that the interrupter of the marriage ceremony was none other than Eve.

During the morning Cecil had as usual visited her in the isolated chamber. Though she entertained no apprehension of Eve's discovery by any of the household, she had not once relaxed the precaution she adopted upon the first day of her confinement there. The key belonging to the room was never out of her possession for a moment.

But this day, in an absent-minded mood, she drew it from the door without having turned it in the lock.

Eve's mind was in a confused state, the effect of the drug which was daily administered. After Cecil left her she stood by the window, watching the dull drip of the monotonous rain without. Growing weary of this, she wandered about the room, arranging the furniture and turning over a few old books which it contained.

Some illustrations in these claimed her attention for a time. She made no attempt to read; indeed, her mind was not sufficiently collected to take in the sense of the printed words which wearied her eyes.

At last, in her aimless way, she tried the door, and finding it yielded to her touch, left the room for the first time since she had entered it, weeks before.

She wandered through the passageways of the older portion of the building, trying door after door of the various rooms only to find them fast. At last one swung open, and she found herself in a small triangular apartment, filling an angle where the ancient building joined the newer addition. It was used as a store-room for the household linen, and was fitted on all sides with shelves and closets, and opened into a narrow corridor which led to the upper central hall.

She examined her surroundings curiously, wondering indeed at their strange aspect, but with no remembrance of the place and her coming there.

She made her way unobserved to the inhabited rooms, and at last as we have seen, appeared in the doorway of that one where Mr. Frampton lay.

Rendered timid by her solitary existence during the past few weeks, startled at finding herself in the presence of strangers, as well as by the evident consternation her appearance produced, she turned and fled as the closing door shut her from their sight. Back as she thought by the way she came, but in reality into an opening wing, and at last into the chamber devoted to Richard Holstead's use.

She could hear the sound of voices and of footsteps passing back and forth, but no one came into her retreat. She crouched down in a corner, but as time passed and she was left undisturbed, she arose, and groping her way through the dusk which had now gathered, threw herself upon the bed and soon slept.

Cecil stole away to the now deserted prison room at a later hour. She expected to find that Eve had made her way back there since the search had failed to discover her. She was not much alarmed at not finding her there.

Should she be discovered about the premises, she would doubtless be considered harmlessly insane, and her presence thus be easily accounted for.

The silence which follows the presence of death rested upon the household. The night passed, and the succeeding day brought some intimate friends full of sympathy for the family's bereavement.

It was noon when Doctor Strong came, his usually impressive face worn upon by traces of fatigue. Emmy Brown met him in the hall, and nothing doubting but that he knew of the calamity which had fallen, led him directly to the death-chamber.

The closely-drawn blinds left the room in almost total darkness. Doctor Strong turned back from the threshold with sudden dread.

"What has happened?" he demanded.

"Oh, sir; I thought you knew," returned Emmy, with a burst of tears. "He is dead!"

"Dead! Thank Heaven, I am in time if it be as I think. When did he die?"

Emmy told him brokenly.

The doctor passed into the room where Hugh Frampton lay rigidly still, and while he stood there Richard Holstead came quietly in.

"You were sent for," he said, "but I doubt if you could have averted this sad consequence."

"I was away," replied the doctor. "Holstead, I think I can depend upon you."

"I shall certainly betray no confidence," returned Dick, in some surprise. "But first, let me claim a portion of your time. I have a case which I think will require your immediate attention."

Briefly he related the occurrences of the preceding evening, prefacing the account with the declaration he had overheard Victor make that night in the grounds.

"I did not retire during the night," he continued. "This morning early, after I

had given orders regarding preliminaries of the funeral arrangements, I went to my room intending to rest for an hour or two. And there, quietly sleeping upon my bed, I found the intruder whose fortuitous appearance had broken off the marriage.

My first impulse was to summon the housekeeper and deliver the stranger into her charge. But second thought prompted me to let her presence remain unknown until I had heard her explanation.

"She is young, I should think but little more than twenty, and bears the appearance of having passed recently through a severe illness. While I stood regarding her, she stirred uneasily and awoke.

"She could give no account of her presence in the house, and is evidently laboring under some strong mental delusion. She declares that she is Eve Collingsbrooke, which I presume you know was Mrs. Frampton's maiden name, and though much emaciated she bears a striking resemblance to that lady.

"Her conversation indicates intelligence and culture, and while her assertions prove that her mind is, at least for the time, unbalanced, they contain familiarity with actual truths which entirely puzzles me.

"For instance, she gave me a tolerably succinct account of a fire in my native city, where her father perished and she lost proofs of her fancied identity. Strangely enough, it was from that very fire that I rescued the real Eve Collingsbrooke. She refers, too, to the diamonds which the latter has inherited, claiming them as rightfully her own.

"But when I questioned her she grew confused and distressed, and I thought it best not to agitate her until you had been consulted.

"I called Emmy Brown, who is a discreet girl, and obtaining her promise of secrecy, left the stranger in her charge. She is still in my room, as least apt to be discovered there. Will you come with me and see what you can make of her case?"

He led the way to the apartment indicated, Doctor Strong following, with deep thoughtfulness depicted in his countenance. Eve was seated in an arm-chair before the grate, in which a slight fire blazed. On a stand drawn to her side was a tray containing a scarcely touched repast.

"This is the friend I promised to bring you," said Dick, introducing Doctor Strong. Eve greeted him in a quiet, lady-like manner. She was more collected than when Richard had seen her last, and save for a vague restlessness of manner and disconnection of thought, was quite at her ease.

In reply to their inquiries she repeated the portions of her story which Richard had briefly given. These were the strong incidents which had fixed themselves in her mind, and now that the effect of the potion was gradually wearing off, made themselves apparent, while minor incidents, which would have gone far to prove the truth of her assertions, remained yet obscured.

"But you know you can't be Eve Collingsbrooke," Dick remonstrated. "She is Mrs. Frampton now."

"And so I was to have been," Eve declared. "I can't tell how it was—Cecil did it, I know. Oh, if I could but remember!"

She pressed her hand to her forehead, striving to clear her thoughts. Doctor Strong interposed.

"Never mind now; I am sure you are quite right. Holstead," in an aside, "the poor girl's story may not prove so improbable as you are inclined to think. At all events, humor her in it. Let me count your pulse, Miss Collingsbrooke!"

Eve gave him a grateful glance.

The doctor chatted on indifferent subjects for a moment, and then drew Holstead away.

"What she needs is freedom from all excitement. Give her time, and her mind will become lucid enough. She is suffering now from the effects of a powerful drug."

"A drug?" repeated Dick, wonderingly.

"Ah, you think I may be mistaken?" I am not depending alone on my medical knowledge as a base for my assertion.

"The claims asserted by this poor girl, which have served to puzzle you so, may aid the unraveling of some mysterious points which I have failed to penetrate."

"You will be shocked at the revelation I am about to trust to you. But, first, let us retire beyond fear of interruption."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MASK STRIPPED AWAY.

It was the third night after Mr. Frampton's decease. In the death-chamber a couple of shaded tapers shed a dim light. The watchers for the night had taken their station in an adjoining room, but Doctor Strong, coming in, sent them away to a distant portion of the house—all except Mr. Darnley, who formed one of the number.

"It is almost the hour," the former said.

"You, my good friend, knowing a little of the truth, will assist me with such duties as may arise with the occasion. Hiss! some body comes."

As he spoke, Cecil entered, leaning upon the arm of Victor, and closely followed by Olive, who appeared deeply dejected but quite calm. A moment later Richard came in alone, partially closing the door of communication between the two rooms. They were assembled in the one where the body lay, and Cecil, with a visible shudder, turned to Doctor Strong.

"It is by your request that we have come here in the dead of night, putting aside personal feeling, which would have prompted us to defer all temporal matters until the last sad obsequies were over. Let me beg of you that the presence of the dead shall not be profaned by any needless mockery."

Her voice broke, and she pressed her handkerchief to her face as she sunk into a seat.

"Madam," replied Doctor Strong, his intonation almost harshly stern, "for years I enjoyed the friendship of Mr. Frampton, and would be the last person to disengage his memory. You will admit my loyalty to him at least, before this interview is ended."

"I have not called you together at this time without sufficient object. But, before proceeding to divulge that cause, let me relate a strange story which has recently come to my knowledge."

During the momentary pause which ensued no one broke the silence by words. Cecil, with apparent effort, checked her suppressed sobs, and assumed a listening attitude.

The doctor began:

"Almost a quarter of a century ago, one dark night in early spring-time, the inmates of the convent of St. Mary were disturbed at their late devotions by the violent ringing of the bell at their gates. The portress hastened out to admit the belated applicant

for their hospitality, and returned ere long, bearing a basket, in which reposed a female child but a few weeks of age.

"The little one was the picture of beauty and health, and so won upon the affections of the good sisters that they resolved to adopt her as the child of their order."

"Years passed; and the waif thus cast upon their bounty arrived at the age of budding womanhood. She was destined to take the veil, and was in her novitiate, when her ripening beauty and mental attractions so endeared her to a pupil in the convent school—the only daughter of a wealthy English lady—that the latter determined to procure her emancipation.

"This she accomplished by the presentation of a handsome yearly stipend to the society, and Sister Cecilia—as she had been known—was received into the family of her benefactress as companion to the daughter."

"They treated her always with the utmost consideration, and in addition to other kindnesses, gave her their own name, permitting it to be understood that she was distantly related to them. Thus she became known as Cecil Blake.

"The daughter married early a Sicilian nobleman, and departed with him to his native home. Mrs. Blake died suddenly a few months later, having made no provision for Cecil's maintenance."

"At scarcely seventeen the latter found herself cast homeless and friendless upon the world; but she was possessed of an adventurous spirit and ample faith in her own abilities to insure success. This last was probably shaken somewhat by the experience of the first few months."

"After ineffectual efforts to procure some more lucrative employment, she succeeded in obtaining a position as nursery-governess in a well-to-do trader's family. Here she fell in with an adventurer named Arnaud, who, for his own reasons at the time, was endeavoring to win the confidence of the most influential tradespeople."

"He succeeded to such a degree that when he disappeared, a few weeks later, he carried with him a large sum of ready money obtained from them on various false pretenses."

"More than this, Cecil Blake, who had clandestinely married him, also disappeared; and though information on this point is not definite, it is presumed that they occupied some months traveling from one to another of the European capitals, making their appearance in the higher grades of society and meeting with varying success in the confidence game they practiced."

"Arnaud was a professional gambler, and at Baden-Baden became involved in a quarrel ending in a duel, in which he mortally wounded his antagonist. Compelled to fly the country, he next appeared in New York, where he gained only a precarious subsistence."

"Here he was implicated in some piece of detected villainy, and it was during the trial that the foregoing facts became known. Notwithstanding the suspicions that were strong against him, he succeeded, with a good fortune, more rare than deserving, in clearing himself of the charge preferred."

"During this time he had lived contentedly enough with his wife, but now began to tire of her. She followed him with a jealous devotion which began to restrain the liberty of action he desired. As a means of ridding himself of her, he hired a woman from the street to repeat a trumped-up tale of his marriage during a previous visit to the United States; herself claiming to be his legal wife."

"The woman played her part well. Cecil was convinced, and frenzied alike with jealousy and a sense of the wrong done her, determined to be revenged upon the man who had thus played her false."

"She visited an Israelite who combined the avocations of chemist and pharmacist, and procured from him a poison productive of deadly results if once infused into the blood."

"Afterward she sought Arnaud, and upbraiding him with his deception, made an attempt to stab him with a stiletto which bore the poison upon its point."

"He averted the blow, but in doing so turned it upon herself. The wound inflicted was slight and would not have been dangerous but for the poison introduced into her veins. She knew her own peril, however, and lost no time in summoning the Jew from whom she had procured the deadly drug."

"He administered an antidote and succeeded in saving her life, though she was prostrated by a long illness before ultimate recovery. Meanwhile, Arnaud disappeared, and when she sought for him no trace could be anywhere found."

"Again she found herself thrown upon her own resources. She drifted about from place to place, having no definite calling, but supporting herself in a respectable way as a solicitor for agencies; giving lessons in private families; serving occasionally as a model to rising young artists, and once assisting in a hair-dressing establishment, where a happy faculty of giving universal satisfaction would have secured her a permanent situation had she so desired."

"She left it, however, to become companion to a lady who was about to depart for a tour through Europe. But the latter was whimsical, perhaps tyrannical, and Cecil left her service immediately on landing in England."

"Here she encountered an English gentleman, who, with his daughter, was en route for this country. She engaged herself as lady's maid to the latter, and with them returned to America."

"After a few months spent in visiting various points of interest throughout the States, they made arrangements for a short sojourn in one of our northern cities. Here they were to meet the betrothed husband of her mistress, the engagement being one of long standing and the participants in it having never met."

"Upon the night of their arrival the hotel at which they stopped was consumed by fire, many of the inmates perishing in the flames. The maid was rescued, but in the confusion which ensued was mistaken for her mistress, the error arising, perhaps, in consequence of a strong resemblance existing between the two."

"The doctor paused, closely regarding his little audience. Cecil sat quite motionless, her face shaded by a small Japanese screen which she had taken up. D'Arno played nervously with his watch-chain, but evidently awaited further revelations. The rest were listening attentively. Olive wonderingly, until his last few sentences cast a glimmering of light into her mind."

CHAPTER XXIV.

A DISSOLVING SCENE.

"To simplify my tale," continued the

doctor, "I will here state that the English gentleman to whom I have made reference was the late Captain Collingsbrooke."

"All present know the circumstances of Mr. Frampton's engagement to the captain's daughter, and of his marriage supposedly with the same; really with the discarded wife of Arnaud, who has since imposed himself here over the pseudonym of D'Arno."

"Victor sprung to his feet with a smothered curse. The screen fell away from Cecil's hand, and she raised her face, desperate yet defiant, toward this self-appointed expositor of her past life."

"Where you have chanced to stumble across this romantic fabrication, Doctor Strong, or by what means you have been imposed upon by it, I am at a loss to understand. Certainly, the changes you have preferred are too ridiculous to gain credence, and knowing this, I spare you the indignation I might otherwise entertain."

"At a signal from the doctor, Richard Holstead passed into the adjoining room, returning almost immediately with Eve Collingsbrooke."

"This," said Doctor Strong, presenting her to the little company, "is Miss Eve Collingsbrooke proper, who is prepared to substantiate that portion of my recital relating to herself, and the subsequent assumption of her individuality by her former maid."

"And you, Cecil Blake Arnaud, have yet to bear the weight of a heavier charge than any I have thus far preferred. So surely as Hugh Frampton is actually dead, you are his murderer!"

A low, horrified cry broke from Olive's lips. Victor had sunk back into his seat, sullen and silent. Cecil glanced into the faces about her, but found no friendliness depicted there. Yet, with a mocking laugh, she threw back her bright head to confront her accuser.

"I defy you, Doctor Strong! I think all here must be weak in mind as the poor lunatic yonder, from whom you have doubtless culled your extraordinary tale. You will pardon me if I refuse to further with my presence such slander of the living, such sacrilege to the dead!"

She rose as if about to quit the apartment, but Mr. Darnley quietly placed his burly form before the door.

"Stay!" commanded Doctor Strong, sternly. "Await the result of the crime which you have committed in intent; whether in fact or not remains to be tested."

"My friends, this woman has administered to Hugh Frampton a powerful potion from which death does not immediately ensue, though a state of coma is thereby produced closely resembling death."

"My own suspicions, aided by information from Mr. Darnley, who had seen her, at a recent date, enter the shop of the Jew pharmacist, led me to seek the latter and force from him the acknowledgment of having supplied her with such a drug. There is a chance that she has not succeeded in her infamous purpose."

"I procured an antidote which I am now about to administer in obedience to the Israelite's direction. Either of the drugs given separately are productive of fatal results. After a given time has elapsed, between the third and fifth days after one has been administered, the other, he claims, will counteract its effect. This is the earliest moment I dared use the antidote."

"I call upon you all to witness my endeavor to revive him, and if it fails, I charge you to prevent the escape of that woman, his murderess, and her accomplice."

He stooped over the deathlike form, and placed a tiny vial containing a dark liquid to the rigid lips. A drop trickled between, another, and another, and then the doctor paused, counting the seconds as they passed.

Again, after a moment, he dropped the liquid, and again waited.

The third time the colorless lips twitched, and a shudder convulsed the whole body.

"Thank God!" muttered the doctor, pausing to wipe great beads of perspiration from his face.

At short intervals he continued to administer the contents of the little vial.

The breath of life fluttered faintly over Mr. Frampton's lips; his heart beat again, and all the minute organs which respond to vitality resumed their action, feebly but unmistakably.

"He is saved," the doctor announced, turning to the anxious group that waited breathlessly.

Olive sobbed aloud. Mr. Darnley and Dick Holstead brushed suspicious moisture from their eyelashes.

No one put forth a hand to stay Cecil as she went out, carrying her defeat bravely in the face of them all. Victor had stolen silently away at the first moment attention had been drawn from him to the reviving man.

Cecil found him pacing the halls, awaiting her coming.

"He will live," she said, briefly. "Victor, it is truth that I was your wife all that time? For the sake of Heaven, don't deceive me now!"

"Yes, it's true!" he answered, sullenly. "I may as well own to it, now that there's nothing to be gained by a denial."

"Oh, how could you have *could* you be so cruel? I have loved you so always."

"Come, no sentiment now, Cecil," he interrupted her, roughly. "Let us think what is best to be done, since you have succeeded in overthrowing our fine prospects so admirably. At least we will not wait to be turned away, for they'll scarcely adopt stronger measures than that. Get together what you can, and let's be off at once."

She stepped back slowly, keeping her eyes fixed steadily upon his face. In that moment she scorned him for his utter selfishness, even while she acknowledged his scarcely-diminished power over her.

"If I thought you cared less for me, Victor, than the wealth we have vainly striven for, I would stay here and brave the consequences of all that I have done."

"Don't be silly, Cecil. Of course I care for you; you can't doubt that. Make haste, as well as the best you can, out of this cursed business. Get the diamonds, at all hazards, and meet me at the old bridge soon as possible. I will be there!"

He strode away, and she, with a dull, heavy ache at heart, crept toward her own chamber. She had little faith left in him now; but her woman's nature, having loved him blindly once, clung ever afterward to her idol, even when its fair proportions fell away and it was exposed to her in all its base deformity.

Swiftly she gathered together the valuable trinkets with which Mr. Frampton had

delighted to adorn her. She drew her jewel casket from the drawer where it was always kept, and flung back the lid.

Costly gems sparkled there; pearls, amethysts and sapphires; but the chief treasure that had been there contained, the *parure* of diamonds, was gone.

Dick Holstead, anticipating some such finale as this, had instructed Emmy Brown to steal them away, and even now the Collingsbrooke diamonds were in possession of their rightful owner.

Cecil felt the uselessness of any attempt to regain them. Even while she hesitated, footsteps approached. She caught up the casket, and throwing a dark mantle about her, stole out like a thief from the princely place where so lately she had reigned undisputed mistress.

Victor awaited her near the deep, sluggish stream where Richard had encountered Olive on the day of his arrival at Frampton Place.

"This way," he said, "and be careful. There, let me take your packages."

She had nothing but the jewel casket and a little portmanteau containing a few necessary articles. She told him so as she gave them into his hands. They stepped together upon the frail structure which bridged the stream.

Midway there was a fall and a shrill cry, choked by the closing, turbulent waters.

Did she make a mis-step, or was it the hand of the man she loved so much too fondly that precipitated her to her doom? God knows!

They found her there—all that was left of her—tangled in the slimy, loathsome weeds beneath the slender osiers which edged the stream. Swift retribution had overtaken her, and in pity more than anger they gave the frail, beautiful body Christian burial.

CHAPTER XXV.

FLOATING WITH THE STREAM.

It is late winter now. Frampton House looms up, a dark, imposing pile, against the stretch of snowy background sparkling in the winter sunshine.

Within, great fires cast their ruddy glow into the furthest corners, rivaling the brightness which falls through the slightly-curtained panes.

A cozy party is assembled there. Mr. Frampton, thinner than of old, with a grave shadow upon his face which was not there before, yet unbent and unbroken by the sorrowful ordeal through which his life has passed, is the genial host of a pleasant company.

The Holsteads are staying for a time at Frampton Place. Richard, long endeared through his truly noble qualities to the owner of the place, has also succeeded in impressing Olive with a sense of his worth; and he has brought his mother there to make the acquaintance of her future daughter-in-law.

The kindly-hearted elderly lady and the young girl are mutually pestered with each other, and Olive's second betrothal promises a happy consummation.

Eve Collingsbrooke, who, at Mr. Frampton's earnest solicitation, has taken up her abode with them, has regained perfect health, and with it a renewal of the fair loveliness which stamps her so like the erring and lost Cecil, but softened by a gentle expression which the latter never possessed.

With Mr. Frampton there can be no renewal of that passion which he lavished so bountifully upon the woman who, for one short year, held a sacred position as his supposed wife. Her death blotted out the bitter feeling he might otherwise have held toward her, and though there is a sore spot in his heart which no lapse of time can heal, that year is marked as the brightest of his whole existence.

To Eve he is no more than a firm, faithful friend, and as much as she reveres him, another has gained a firmer hold on her affections. Doctor Strong, grown young since he has renounced his received intention of remaining a bachelor, has sped his wooing with the ardor which can belong as truly to the earnest spirit of forty years as to the hot young blood of twenty-five.

The Darnleys, too, are there. Sophie, in the blushing happiness of early bridehood, less volatile than of old, and evidently very proud of her poet-husband. Mr. Darnley, discoursing at length upon his favorite hobby, and finding a patient listener in Mrs. Holstead, whose thoughts are carried back to her own girlhood and the old farm where it was passed. Who knows what may be brought about where tastes assimilate?

Other trials will come, without doubt, to some or all of these actors in the scenes we have followed, before their span of years shall have run out. But now, while all is bright about them, let us drop the curtain before the possibility of future shadows.

THE END.

We are soon to start another exquisite romance by this same author, viz.: "STRANGELY WED"—truly a strange story, full of the most intense personal interest, and of a most exciting and peculiar nature of story. Mrs. BURTON is now recognized as among the first of living female writers, and this new story will most fully confirm the position which she has so worthily won. She writes exclusively for the SATURDAY JOURNAL.

Tracked to Death:

THE LAST SHOT.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID.
AUTHOR OF "HELPLESS HARRY," "LONG RANCHER," "SCALP HUNTERS," "WHITE CHIEF," ETC.

CHAPTER LXIII.

A SEARCH AMONG CORPSES.

CRISTUCKER stood beside the dead bodies, for a while scarce knowing what to do.

His first impulse was to turn back, rush out of the courtyard, and away altogether from the place. With all his courage—for the young hunter had courage—the sight was enough to scare, and cause him to make retreat.

He would have done this, but for a thought that stayed him. It was a loyal thought, worthy of a backwoodsman. It was about Hawkins. His body might be found among the rest; and affection for his old com

he passed among the dead bodies, at times being compelled to step across one.

He examined one after another, bending low down over them—lower where they lay in shadow, and it was more difficult to determine their kind and color.

He soon went the round of the court, and completed the scrutiny of all. Living or dead, Hawkins was not among them.

Nor was there the body of a white man. The stricken victims were of every age and both sexes. There were men, women and children. But all, male and female, were colored people—slaves. Many of them he recognized; knew them to be the house-servants of Colonel Armstrong and Dupre. Where were their masters? Where was everybody? What terrible tragedy had occurred to leave such traces behind it? The traces of murder—of a wholesale, sanguinary slaughter? Who had been the murderers, and where were they? Where was Hawkins?

These self-asked interrogatories, quick following one another, brought Cris Tucker to a stand, and caused him to reflect. And while he was reflecting, a sound fell upon his ears that made him start, at the same time giving him a thrill of joy.

It was the sound of a human voice—the same he had before heard, or fancied. Then it was distant; now it seemed nearer—at all events, more distinct.

After listening to it for a few seconds, he became sure it was a cry for help.

It appeared to come from beyond the building, as if the person so appealing were outside. Could it be his comrade?

Tucker did not stay to conjecture why Hawkins should be shouting. He did not remain one moment longer in the courtyard, but, leaping lightly over the dead bodies, rushed out through the open gateway.

Once outside, he made pause and listened. He but waited for the voice to direct him; which it did. Again he heard it, as before, calling for help. He was now quite sure of its being Hawkins. The voice appeared to come from the eastern side of the building; that which might be called its back, from being least intruded upon.

Now recognizing the voice, and knowing it to be put forth appealingly, Tucker made no more pause, but rushed round the angle of the wall, breaking through the bushes like a chased deer.

He did not again stop, until under the window whence came the cries.

The moonlight showed him his comrade's face, pressed, distorted against the bars, shouts proceeding from his lips, mingled with curses.

"Hawkins!"

"Cris Tucker! Is't you, Cris? Thank the Almighty!"

"What does it all mean, Hawkins?"

"Mean? That's more'n we can tell. We're all shut up here—shut up by Indians. Haven't you seen them? Have you been inside the building?"

"I've been inside, an' see'd a ugly sight. Not Indians, but their devil's work, I reckon; they're gone off after doin' it."

"What sight? But, don't stay to talk. Go back, get something to break open the door, and let us out. Quick, Cris, quick!"

This brought the colloquy to an abrupt termination. After which Cris Tucker hastened back to the courtyard as rapidly as he had quitted it, and there, laying hold of a heavy beam, brought it to bear, like a battering-ram, against the dining-room door.

Massive as this was, and strongly hung upon its hinges, it had to yield to the strength of the young hunter, who, as Hawkins himself, was a stalwart Kentuckian.

When it was at length laid open, releasing the imprisoned men, they beheld a spectacle that sent a thrill of horror through their hearts.

But to Colonel Armstrong himself, to Dupre, to Wharton, to most of the others, there was a worse horror behind: the dark shadow of uncertainty and suspense, more terrible to endure than reality itself, however disastrous.

On escaping from the room where they had been so long and so irksomely confined, they spoke interrogatively, each asking the question most affecting himself. In the confusion of voices one could be heard inquiring for a wife; another for a sister, or brother; a third for his sweetheart; all hopefully thinking whether these still lived, or despairingly conjecturing whether they should find them dead—lying with gashed throats and bleeding breasts, like those they saw upon the pavement of the patio.

The spectacle before their eyes was sufficiently terrible. But nothing compared with that conjured up by their apprehensions, and which they might soon have to look upon. What they saw might be only the index of what they were yet to see.

Amid these cries for wife, child, sister and sweetheart, loudest of all was the voice of Colonel Armstrong, calling for his daughters.

CHAPTER LXV.

WHERE WERE THEY?

In tones of distress—the accents of a father bereaved—Colonel Armstrong was inquiring for his daughters. Where were they? No one could give answer to the question.

What had become of them? Whither had they gone, or been taken?

Let us follow, and find.

The girls, on being seized and carried off, knew it was done by men. Indians, they believed; for, although they had caught but a glimpse of their captors before the *serapes* were thrown over their heads, they saw plumes and painted faces.

The arms that, rudely grasping, lifted them aloft and bore them from the spot, could be no other than the brawny arms of savages.

Only for a short distance were they thus transported—only over the debris of adobes, through the breach in the broken wall, and a few paces further.

Then they felt themselves raised a little higher, and placed upon the backs of horses—upon saddle-croups—the men who had carried them taking a front seat in the saddles. To these they were quickly attached by ropes of rawhide; other men on foot assisting in the management of the double mount.

To all this the girls had not submitted either patiently, or in silence. Both had struggled, and made every effort to escape. They had given utterance to shrieks. All in vain. Only the first could have been heard any distance off; the others were inaudible save to the savages themselves.

As the blankets were drawn closer over their faces, and with cords tied tightly round their necks, their cries could no more be heard, or only as muffled moans.

Their captors, having thus secured them, started off at a quick pace.

The captives soon ceased to struggle and shout. To do either would be idle. They had been for some time in motion, and knew they were on horseback. They must now be far from the Mission walls—from the friends who could succor them.

For nearly half an hour they were hurried along, suffering extreme mental anguish the while. Physical as well; for the blankets that had been thrown over their heads and tightly tied round their necks were *serapes* of *Saltillo*, so close woven as to be waterproof. They were in danger of suffocation.

Perceiving this, their captors made stop; and with their knives ripped open a portion of the central slits—that for some reason or other had been sewed up—giving them a chance to inhale a little air.

Was it a spark of compassion lingering within the savage breast? Or did the precaution spring from a desire to preserve the precious spoil they had taken?

Whatever might be the motive, their captives had little time to reflect upon it. Soon as the act was performed the horses were once more put in motion, and spurred to the same hurried pace as before.

The sisters knew that they were near one another; though up to this time they had not spoken a word. They could tell also that there were but two men along with them, and two horses. The hoof-strokes gave them knowledge of this.

Hitherto they had not exchanged speech; partly because the muffling prevented it, but more from their being still under a sort of paralysis—half of fear, half the numbness of despair.

The behavior of the Indians in cutting open the *serapes* and permitting them to draw freer breath, whether an act of humanity or not, gave them some confidence; and each now thought of communicating with the other.

Before doing so they listened; in hopes of discovering from the talk of their captors what was going to be done to them. Between these a conversation was now carried on, and had been all along the way. But it was in a low tone, and apparently a strange tongue; and the captives, after intently listening, could make nothing of it.

This gave them confidence to speak to one another, each reflecting for herself. The Indians would not be able to understand what they said; therefore there could be no danger in interchanging their thoughts.

It was Helen who first arrived at this conclusion, and first spoke. She said: "Courage, Jessie! courage! Do you hear me, sister?"

"I do, Helen. Oh, God!"

"Ay, God! Let Him be our hope! He may yet rescue us. Keep up your heart, Jessie! Something tells me—I don't know what it is—but something whispers me we shall escape from these horrid monsters. It may be God's will. Pray to Him, as I am doing."

"I have, Helen; I will now. But, oh! what of our dear father?—of Louis? Both, I fear—"

"Don't fear for them; you needn't. I believe they are safe. I don't think the savages could have surprised them all. Some must have escaped; and they'll be certain to come after us. Ay, they will be in time to rescue us—I feel sure of it. You know there are many among our people noted as great hunters and trackers. They will be able to follow us anywhere, though these do not know it."

"Louis will lead them. He will give all his gold. Yes, he will—"

Jessie's speech was interrupted by a loud, mocking laugh. It came from the men who conducted them. It shook the bodies of both; till their captives, tied to and close pressing against their backs, could feel the horrid vibration.

Before the peal had ended the horses were wading knee-deep in water, and the plunging of their hoofs rendered inaudible all other sounds.

They were evidently crossing a stream, at a place shallow enough to be forded. A wide stream, as they knew by the long-continued splashing of water, whose cold sprays, pelted back against the blankets, were felt by those they enveloped.

Both became silent after hearing that laughter intoned with a hellish scorn, as if it came from the throats of demons.

No wonder the two sisters felt awed; now more than ever. They trembled as the horses went wading on through the water.

CHAPTER LXV.

SPECTRAL HORSEMEN.

"SIMON Woodley, I can't sleep."

"Why, Charley Clancy? You oughter be able. Ye've had futeeg enuf to put ye in the way o' slumberin' soun' as a possum. An' ye've slep' to'able well other nights since we struck Texin soil."

"True, I have. But this night I can't, and don't know why."

"Perhaps ye've swallowed somethin' as don't sit well on your stomach? Or it may be, the kimal' o' this river bottom. Sartin it do feel a little dampish, 'count o' the river fog; tho', as a general thing, the San Sabar valley air reck'n'd 'mong the healthiest spots in all Texas. S'pose ye take a pull out o' this hyar flask o' myn. As you know, it's the best Monongahely, an' for a sedimentary o' the narves thar ain't the like to be foun' in any 'pothecary's shop. I'll bet my last dollar on that. Take a suck, Charley, and see what it'll do for ye."

"It would have no effect. I know it wouldn't. It isn't nervousness that's keepin' me awake—something quite different."

"Oh," grunted the old hunter, in a tone that told of comprehension. "Somethin' quite different? I reckon I kin guess what the somethin' air—the same as keeps other young fellers awake, thinkin' o' thar sweethearts. Foller my device. Take a pull out o' the flask, an' ye'll soon be in the arms o' Morpheus, whar ye'll forget all about y'r gurl. Yar know ye needn't now hev any fear. The trail shows clearly that they've got safe to their destination. An', unless we meet some cussed, crooked luck, we'll be thar ourselves less'n a kuppel o' hours arter sun up the mornin' mornin'. We oughter get up to the ole Mission afore the time o' breakfastin', and ef we ain't made welkin to a pone o' corn-bread an' a hunk o' bacon, to say nothin' o' the best o' coffee doin's, then Kurnel Armstrong hev changed his ways in changin' his place o' abidin'. When he lived in ole Mississippi, Sime Woodley, for one, war allers welkin to the best in his house. Pat some o' this physic inside y'r skin, an' you'll be asleep in the shakin' of a goat's tail."

It was well on to midnight when this dialogue occurred between Clancy and Wood-

ley; the place being where they had made their night halt on the bank of the San Sabar, a little below the ford.

Notwithstanding that their camp was only for the night, they had chosen its site with an eye to security. It was among some bushes that curtailed the edge of the stream, the tops of which were high enough to screen their horses; while they themselves, standing erect, could see over them. No one could cross in the clear moonlight without coming under their view.

The backwoodsman had sufficient experience of prairie dangers to make him at all times cautious, and he had chosen the spot with an eye to its advantages.

It was some time after they had laid down that the exchange of speech took place; Heywood, Harkness and Jupiter being long asleep. So had been Woodley himself. Clancy had alone remained awake sitting up, with head resting on his knees; the hound stretched along the grass at his feet.

While the others were enjoying the profound slumber induced by a long day's travel, he had been restless, at intervals changing attitude.

Woodley, habituated to sleep lightly—as the phrase has it, "with one eye open"—had been awakened by one of these uneasy shiftings. It caused him to inquire why his comrade was keeping awake. Then ensued the conversation reported.

It terminated by Clancy following the old hunter's advice, by taking a pull from his whisky-flask.

After which he laid himself along the grass, and, with blanket wrapped around him, once more essayed to sleep.

As before, he was unsuccessful. Although for a while he lay tranquil and courted slumber, it would not come. He again commenced tossing and turning, and at length rose to his feet, the dog starting up too.

Woodley, once more awakened, saw that his potion had failed of effect, and consoled trying it again.

"No," said Clancy, "it would do no good. I don't think the strongest sleeping-draught in the world would be of any use to me just now. Simeon Woodley, I have a presentiment."

"Presentiment o' what?"

"That we'll be too late."

Clancy pronounced these words in a tone of solemnity that told of apprehensions strongly felt—whether prophetic or false.

"That air's all nonsense," rejoined Woodley, wishing to comfort his comrade; "the night o' nonsense. Wheesh!"

The final exclamation, uttered in a changed tone, was accompanied by a start, the hunter suddenly raising his head from the saddle on which it rested. It had no connection with the previous part of his speech. In what he was about to say he had been interrupted by hearing a sound, or fancying he heard one. At the same instant the hound pricked up its ears, as it did so giving utterance to a low growl.

"What is't, I wonder?" interrogated Woodley, in a whisper, as he placed himself in a kneeling posture, his eyes sharp set upon the dog.

Again the animal jerked his ears, growling as before.

"Lay hold o' the critter, Charley! Don't let him git tongue. Thar's something approachin', somewhar."

Clancy caught the dog, drew the animal up against his knees, and by speech and gesture admonished it to remain silent.

The well-trained hound knew what was wanted; and, crouching down by its master's feet, ceased demonstrating.

Meanwhile Woodley had again laid himself flat along the sward, and, with ear pressed close to the earth, listened intently.

There was a sound, sure enough; though not what he fancied having heard but the moment before. That was like a human voice, in laughter, afar off. It might be the too-who-ha of the great Texan owl, or the bark of the prairie wolf. What reached his ears now was a less ambiguous sound, and he had no difficulty in determining its character. It was the sound of water being violently agitated—churned—as by the hoofs of horses wading across the stream. Clancy, standing erect, now heard it too.

The backwoodsman did not remain much longer prostrate, only a moment to assure himself of the direction whence the sound came. It was from the ford. The dog had looked that way on first starting up.

Woodley leaped to his feet, and the two men sat up and closed their eyes, listening.

They had no need to listen any longer; for their eyes were now above the tops of the bushes, and they saw what was disturbing the water. Two horses were crossing the ford. They were just emerging out of the timber's shadow on the opposite bank, making toward mid-stream. This, with the moonlight falling upon it, looked like molten silver.

Clancy and Woodley, elevated above the water, could see the horses outlined against its shining surface, and also that there were but two. Nor had they any difficulty in making out that they were mounted. What puzzled them was the manner. The riders did not look like men; they did not seem any thing human. There was a slight haze overhanging the river, like thin gauze thrown over some precious piece of plate. It was the white filmy mist that enlarges objects beyond their natural size, often producing the mystery of *mirage*. Under its magnifying influence both horses and riders appeared of gigantic dimensions. The former might be mastodons, the latter Titans bespreading them. Both seemed beings of a weird wonder-world—existence not known on our planet, or only in ages past.

CHAPTER LXVI.

DOUBLE MOUNTED.

In truth was it a singular spectacle—that presented on the waters of the San Sabar. The two figures, apart and distinct, had the true equine outline underneath, only of elephantine size. It was what appeared above, on their backs, that puzzled the observers on the river's bank.

The riders were not of human shape. And if demons, they were double; for there were two heads and two bodies above each horse. No wonder that Clancy and Woodley, as they watched them wading the stream, gave way to weird, ghostly thoughts. The sight was enough to awe the stoutest hearts; for there could have been none stouter than theirs.

The supernatural spell held possession of them but for a short period of time. Then reason resumed its sway; and they became convinced that the spectacle before their eyes was a thing of reality—like most other mysteries, simple when understood.

It was Woodley who first offered the ex-

planation, though Clancy needed it not. Simultaneously had he arrived at the same conclusion to which his comrade had come.

The latter said, in *sotto voce*—almost in a whisper: "Two horses, both o' 'em rid dubble."

After a short interval of silence, he continued:

"Them ridin' look like Injuns. Don't ye see tufts o' feathers rising over thar crowns? Thar's Injun head-wear for sartin. The critters behind look like squaws. I guess they air squaws, though mostwise on these paraisas the Injun weemen hev a hoss apiece to themselves. It air kewrious they shud be ridin' two-and-two. Still more kewrious 'bout only the two kuppel goin' together. Thar perplexes Sime Woodley, an' makes him think, whomever them dubble riders is, they desurve lookin' arter. By good luck we've got the devantago o' them, an' kin do it. They're boun' to kum on this side the crossin', and sure to take the reglar trail as leads on through the timber. Thar we kin intercept them by a near cut I know on. Let's do it, Charley!"

"What about these?" asked Clancy, pointing to their slumbering comrades.

"Hain't we better awake them? We may want their help."

Woodley stood considering. Then said: "I suspect we shan't. Thar's but two buck Injuns. Their does won't count much in a skirmish. An' ef they did show their teeth an' toe-nails, me an' you needn't feel afraid, I reckon. We're good for bigger odds than thet. Purhaps, howsoever, we'd better roust up Heywood, lettin' Harkness an' the nigger lie still. Ye-es; on second thought, let's hev Heywood 'long w' us. Ned! Ned!"

The summons was not spoken aloud; only whispered into Heywood's ear, who, on hearing it, started, and then sat up.

Another whisper caused him to spring to his feet.

When erect, he saw why he had been aroused. A glance cast toward the river told him. The strangely-riden horses were still visible, though now, having nearly accomplished the crossing, they were just entering into the shadow of the trees that selved the nether bank.

In a few hurried words Woodley made the younger hunter acquainted with the intention he and Clancy had already half-formed; and for a short while the trio, holding their rifles in hand, remained in consultation. They did not deem it necessary to arouse Harkness and Jupiter. It would scarce be prudent. Any noise made, or time wasted, and the savages might escape them.

For the capture of these had now been determined on. And the three would be strength sufficient.

"Our horses?" suggested Heywood.

"Hain't we better be mounted?"

"No," said Woodley. "Ef the Injuns make to ride off, we kin stop 'em by shootin' down their critters. Ef we disturb our horses, they mout hear us, and put into the timber, whar we'd never agin set eyes on 'em. I know the trail that leads out from the river—every foot of it. They're boun' to come along that, an' we kin be thar afore 'em, an' hev 'em in a trap. Thar need be no shootin' done. Onc'e we git our claws on their bridle-reins, they're ours. Havin' their squaws along, they won't make no resistance. Besides, arter all, they may be friendly Injuns. Ef they ar, it'd be some pity to kill 'em. Thar's no need to do it. We kin capture 'em by ambuscade ezey enuf. What do ye say, Charley Clancy?"

"By all means let us adopt the course you suggest. We must not spill innocent blood."

"Thar'll be no need," reiterated Woodley; "trust that to me. Kum on!"

The three were about starting forward, when a fourth figure appeared by their side. It was Jupiter who thus joined them. The mulatto's life, with its many sufferings, had made him also a light sleeper, and he had been for some time lying awake. Although the others had only conversed in whispers, he heard enough to make him know that something was going to be done in which there might be danger to Charles Clancy. This would be as danger to himself. The fugitive slave, now free, would have laid down his life for him who had helped him to his freedom.

He begged to be taken along, and permitted to share in their danger—whatever that might be.

There could be no objection, and Jupiter was joined to the party.

Again there was a pause before starting out. What about Harkness? Should he be kept under surveillance? He had not lately been treated as a prisoner. Still, he had not been much trusted, and it might not be safe now. They were even not sure that the man was not yet in league with the scoundrels he professed to have abandoned. That might be all pretense.

They stood hesitating—uncertain. Then Simeon Woodley cut things short by grasping the collar of Harkness's coat and jerking him erect upon his feet.

"Without waiting for the astonished sleeper to utter one word of remonstrance, the old hunter whispered into his ear: 'Kum along, Joe Harkness! Keep close arter us, an' don't ask any questions. 'Thar, Jupe, do you take care o' him. Now, boys, let's on! We'll hev bare time to get to the place whar the Injuns must pass. Step as if ye war treadin' on eggs.'"

Saying this, the hunter gave Harkness a push that sent him close to the mulatto. After which he started off, the others following in single file, Clancy holding the hound in leash.

Before long they came upon the trail that led out from the crossing. It was a well-defined path, running transversely through the timbered tract that bordered the river-bank, and on across the bottom-land, where the valley was treeless, resembling a vast meadow.

To that point, where the path debouched into the open ground, Woodley conducted his party, going to it along a diagonal line. Some broad-leaved palm-trees offered a fit place of ambush. Amid these, taking stand, they awaited the coming up of the Indians.

CHAPTER LXVII.

DISMOUNTED.

THAT laugh, whose horrid cacklings soon after became blended with the sound of surging water, had made an impression upon the minds of the sisters difficult to be described. It was surprise, quickly followed by fear—a great fear. To both had occurred the thought that the men having died in charge were *not* Indians. Indians could not have understood what they had said. Clearly they understood it, for it

must have been that which elicited their laughter; in the tone of which there was a mocking significance that told of comprehension.

To the captives it was no relief to think they were with white men. Under the circumstances, there was as much to be dreaded, if not more. In the breast of a savage there might be some spark of pity—there is often a trace of chivalry. Whereas the laugh that came from the throats of those guarding them had in it the true ring of ruffianism. Men who would thus mock them in their misery could have no humanity in their hearts; and from them no mercy need be expected.

Who could these men be? This was the question simultaneously asked by the captives—each of herself.

Now, knowing that private speech could not pass between them, they had no more thought of addressing one another.

While the horses were wading through the water, both gave way to silent conjectures, their hearts more than ever oppressed with apprehension.

Jessie's thought was that one of the men with them was Fernand. The half-blood could speak English, and therefore understand what they had said. It was her fear, too; her terror, as might be deduced from what she had told her sister just before they were taken captive. Who the other might be she neither thought nor cared to think. Enough misfortune for her if one was Fernand. Her blood ran cold at the thought.

Helen had misgivings about both. She, too, thought it more than likely that Dupre's treacherous servant was one of the two taking them off. But, unlike her sister, it was not about him her apprehensions were keenest. Something admonished her that in the other man—his whose body was in close contact with her own—she would find a enemy already known; one from whom, whatever the event, she need expect no compassion.

It might be but fancy—a grim, somber fancy—engendered by her fears. But if not, and the conjecture should prove true, oh, God! what was to become of her?

Just as the fearful forecast swept like a torrent through her soul, the splashing in the water ceased, and the hoofs struck with firm rebound upon the bank.

Then both horses were pulled up, and the two men exchanged speech. One said: "I reckon we may just as well set down hyar. Cap sayd we war to wait for 'em under the big oak. I don't see the use o' our goin' on thar, gropin' our way through them bushes and gettin' our duds torn by thorns. This place is every bit as good, for all the time we'll hev to stay. I guess our fellows won't make much delay, once they've got what they goed for. They'll be arter us in hot haste, and seen' how slow we've come, they oughter soon be hyar. S'pose we hitch up, and stay whar we air? What'd ye say, Phil?"

"No," responded the other, in a tone slightly austerly alive; "we shall go on to the oak; and wait thar. I have my reasons."

"Oh, all right. It's jest the same to me. Only I'm darned tired o' totin' this precious burden at my back, beauty tho' she be. I s'pose I kin promise myself not to have the trouble any further, as Cap'll want to take my place himself. Well, I'm agreed; an' if it's any pleasure to him, he's wonderful welcome to it. You lead on, Phil! I ain't quite sure about the track."

The man spoken to as "Phil" made no reply. He only turned his horse out of the trail that led from the ford; heading him up the river's bank, among thick-standing trees.

In like silence the other rode after.

When they had gone about two hundred yards they again made halt under a great tree, whose branches radiated to a wide circumference around.

Before dismounting they drew their horses together, so that they were both having waited for the other to get alongside.

When their heads were close, the former spoke some words, in a voice only audible to him intended to hear them. They were: "You stay on this side the tree. I'm going to the other. I want a word with her before the rest can get here."

As the ruffian said this, he signaled the muffled form seated on the croup behind him, by slightly turning his head and giving a backward shrug of his shoulder.

All right," answered his fellow-ruffian, accompanying the assent with a gesture significant of a sinister comprehension.

He commenced dismounting on the spot, while the other, having ridden round the trunk, set about doing the same on its opposite side.

Each undid the knot, and let loose the rawhide rope hitherto coupling him with his captive. Then, slipping out of their saddles, they drew the latter down, placing them at full stretch along the ground. Although still under the blanket, and secured by a cord around the neck with another encircling

Bandera thoughtfully surveyed the prairie, on which the Indians were clustered in little groups; apparently he was guessing the number of the foe.

Pedro, the old herdsman, guessed the thoughts of the master of the hacienda. "It is but a small force, señor," he said, "only a raiding party. They have striven to frighten us by big words. If Juan here can succeed in leading the soldiers down upon their rear while we sally forth and attack them in the front, we shall give them such a beating as will make the red devils talk of the hacienda of Bandera for many a long year to come."

"Excellent counsel!" cried the Panther, his warm blood tingling at the prospects of a fray.

"It is good," Bandera said, slowly, and then he fixed his dark eyes upon the half-breed. "Do you think that you can succeed in reaching the town?"

"Yes, señor," replied the herdsman, readily.

"It will be a difficult matter for you to leave the hacienda without the knowledge of the savages though," Lope remarked, his keen eyes noting the positions of the Comanches. "Their line reaches from river to river, thus half-circling us, and the Sego cuts off all escape in the rear."

The dim rays of the young moon gleaming down upon the prairie and dancing in wavy lines of silver light upon the glistening steel lance-heads of savages, plainly revealed the position and number of the besieging foe.

"A mouse could hardly cross yonder prairie and pass the Indian line without observation in this light," Pedro, the herdsman, remarked.

"To reach Dhanis there are other ways than across the prairie and through the Indian line," Juan replied.

"Yes, by crossing the river, but, to do that, one must depart by the gate of the hacienda in full sight of the savages, and ere he had gone ten paces an Indian arrow would stop his progress," Pedro exclaimed.

"You have thought of some other path than by the gate of the hacienda," Bandera said. He had watched the face of the half-breed closely and had noticed the contemptuous smile that had played upon his stolid features at the speech of the herdsman.

"Yes," the half-breed replied, laconically. "And that path?"

"Straight down the wall to the river's bank."

"How will you descend?" questioned Lope. "A cat could not find services wherein to place her claws, let alone a man."

"The lariat which holds the prairie mustang or the buffalo bull will sustain my weight easily," the half-breed replied.

"By the Virgin, a grand idea!" cried the Panther, quickly; "by knotting the lariats together you can easily get the necessary length."

"But the Comanches may be ambushed on yonder bank," Bandera remarked, with a keen glance at the dark line of bushes that fringed the opposite bank of the Sego. The eyes of all the party were turned upon the river's bank.

Full five minutes they stood in silence and watched for sight of gleaming lance-head or waving Comanche plume, but in the dark line of the bushes there appeared no signs of human life.

"It is not likely, señor, that the savages have crossed the river," Pedro said, breaking the silence, "as the stream apparently cuts off all chance of escape."

"Let me try; I can but fail," the half-breed said.

"You shall go!" Bandera exclaimed. "Pedro, go below and prepare the lariats; bring them up here. By standing together in a group we can hide Juan's escape from the eyes of the Indians."

Pedro departed at once. "One thing puzzles me, señor," Lope remarked, watching the motionless group of savages upon the prairie with anxious eyes. "What is that?" Bandera asked.

"Why do not the red devils attack us?" "They are waiting, doubtless, for reinforcements. I confess I do not understand their reasons for acting as they have. Their bold defiance and the warning of the attack is something so contrary to their usual custom that I am puzzled to account for it."

"May it not be a bold bravado intended only to frighten us into yielding to their demands?" Lope questioned. "It may be so, and yet the Comanches should know Ponce de Bandera better than to dream for an instant that he could be frightened by empty threats."

A sudden thought flashed across the mind of the Panther.

"You are about to send to Dhanis for assistance; suppose that the red devils have already attacked the town, and your messenger finds there only a heap of ruins?"

"When the Comanches take Dhanis then the sun will fall from the skies," Bandera replied, contemptuously. "The prairie warriors tried that years ago. The guns of the fort mowed them down as the Northern dried grass. An Indian has a good memory; the Comanches will never face the brass pieces again."

Pedro's return with the lariats, securely knotted together, put an end to the conversation.

The three proceeded to the rear of the hacienda.

"Pardon, señor," said the half-breed, suddenly, "but do I not need a scrap of writing from you? At Dhanis they may not believe my words."

"Yes, I will write a line to the commandante," the Mexican replied.

Bandera left the house-top at once. Pedro sat down upon the roof and tested the knots of the lariat. The half-breed stood like a statue with folded arms, his eyes gazing afar off over the prairie. Lope approached him and quietly placed his hand upon his shoulder. The herdsman never stirred.

"A mission of danger you have taken upon yourself, my silent friend," the Mexican said.

The herdsman did not reply.

"It is not yet too late to make a bargain with me," Lope continued, persuasively. "If you escape from this night's peril, why not seize the fortune that is within your grasp?"

"Fortune! what is fortune?" questioned the half-breed, suddenly. "gold? and what is gold? yellow metal, which a man can neither eat nor wear. I would rather be the chief of yonder plumed and painted warriors, whose lances glisten silver in the moonlight, than own all the broad acres washed by the Sego's stream."

"Oh, gentle herdsman, go and be killed!" cried Lope, in contempt; "a man who despises gold ought to die."

"The scalp of Juan, the herdsman, will

never dry in the smoke of a Comanche lodge," replied the half-breed, coldly.

Bandera's return put an end to the conversation.

The Mexican gave a note into the hands of the herdsman. "There," he said, "give that to the commandante at Dhanis. If he will set out at once, he can take the savages in the rear, and, with our aid, strike them such a blow as will carry terror to the hearts of the redskins and keep our frontier free of them for a year at least."

"I shall remember, señor," the herdsman said, securing the letter in his breast.

"Now how shall we secure the rope?" Bandera asked.

"Pass it around the chimney, señor," suggested Pedro.

The lariat was fastened and the end trailed from the roof of the hacienda to the ground.

"Use all speed possible," said Bandera, as the half-breed prepared to descend.

The herdsman swung himself from the roof, and by the aid of the skin-rope descended to the ground. The three on the roof-top, grouped together, masked the movement. They watched the half-breed enter the water, saw him ford the river and emerge from the stream on the opposite bank and enter the line of shrubbery. Then they cast an anxious glance at the Comanche chiefs circled on the prairie.

Not a horse had stirred—not a warrior had moved; like statues they stood, the moonbeams gleaming down upon them.

"They do not suspect!" cried Bandera, in fierce joy; "and before the first gray streaks of morning light line the sky, I'll strike them such a blow that for months to come they'll curse the hour when they headed their mustangs toward the hacienda of Bandera."

Lope glanced first at the Indians, then along the way that the half-breed had taken, for the figure of the herdsman was not to be seen.

"Satan himself aids this man," he muttered; "the heir whom he has robbed of his estate, whose father he has killed, risks his life to bring assistance to him. I've lost all interest in the game."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE EXPEDITION.

DON ESTEVAN, the commandante of the garrison of Dhanis, was entertaining a merry card-party at his head-quarters.

The hour was late, and the red vintage of old Spain had been freely passed around the board when an orderly entered and announced that two strangers wished to have speech with the commandante immediately on pressing business.

Excusing himself to his guests, Don Estevan withdrew from the festive scene. In the outer chamber he found the two Americans, Gilbert, the mustanger, and Davy Crockett.

The commandante recognized them at once, for the strangers were well known to him.

From the grave look upon their faces the Mexican guessed at once that they came on important business.

"Welcome, señor," he said, in salutation, "you wished to see me?"

"Yes," replied Gilbert; "there is danger afoot; the Comanches are in the saddle."

"A t'arnal red yearquake!" added Crockett, emphatically.

"I have been informed that the Indians meditated an attack," the Mexican officer said.

"It's come for sure," ejaculated the prairie-fighter.

"Have you seen the savages?"

"Yes," Gilbert replied; "in quite a strong force, too, and riding toward the hacienda of Bandera. Myself and friend were on the prairie near to the hacienda when we detected the approach of the marauding party; so we came at once to give the alarm."

"You have done well, señor; but I do not think that there is much danger of the Indians attacking the hacienda. Bandera can muster quite a force, and from behind his adobe walls would give the insolent redskins a warm reception."

"You do not think that they can succeed in surprising the hacienda, then?" Gilbert asked, anxiously.

"Very little danger of that," the Mexican officer replied. "Bandera knows the savages well; for ten years they have threatened him. His hacienda standing right on the border of what they claim as their country is a perpetual menace to them. He will not be taken by surprise, and an open attack he can laugh at. I thank you, gentlemen, for your warning, and in the morning will dispatch a force to look after these red devils."

Then, through the door with scant ceremony, bounded a man; water slid dripped from his coarse garb and the red soil of the prairie was splashed upon his boots.

It was the herdsman, Juan.

"Commandant?" he questioned.

"I am he," the Mexican officer answered.

The herdsman drew a letter from his bosom and handed it to the Mexican.

Don Estevan opened, read it, and then an exclamation of surprise broke from his lips.

"The two Americans watched him with anxiety; they guessed that the letter related to Bandera."

"Tis from Señor Bandera," the commandante said; "he writes that his hacienda is besieged by the Comanches and asks assistance."

"Count me in as a volunteer!" cried the mustanger, quickly.

"An' me too!" exclaimed Crockett.

"Wake snakes! I'm rally sp'illin' for a fight with the redskins."

"The señor writes that the Indians are apparently not in strong force—only a small raiding-party, and that they have not attempted an attack, probably waiting for reinforcements. He suggests that I dispatch a force at once to take the savages in the rear, while at the same moment he will sally forth and attack them in the front."

"An excellent plan!" exclaimed Gilbert.

"If it will only work," said Crockett, dubiously; "an Injun's a good deal like a flea, when you put your hand on him he ain't there."

"It is worth the trial, at all events," the commandante replied. "I will take command of the party myself. You know the position of the Indians?" and he turned toward the herdsman as he asked the question.

"Yes, señor," the half-breed replied.

"Do you think that you can guide us so that we can surprise them?"

"I will do my best, señor, but the Co-

manche is like the wild mustang, he hears with the wind."

"We can encircle them, though, by approaching them from the east and thus drive them into the river. What do you think of that plan, señors?"

"Wa-al, if you want my honest opinion, it seems to me a good deal like ketchin' skaters in a fish-net," said Crockett, bluntly. "The moment they hear the hoofs of our mustangs they dust out over the prairie lively."

"We can try it, at all events," the Mexican said.

Gilbert did not speak. The moment the voice of the herdsman had fallen upon his ears, he had started in surprise and fixed his eyes earnestly on his face.

The movement was not unnoticed by the half-breed, and a shade of annoyance passed across his features; apparently he was not pleased at the scrutiny of the other.

"We will set out at once," the commandante said; "in ten minutes we'll be in the saddle."

"We'll be ready in five!" Crockett cried.

"You remain here," the commandante said to the herdsman. "I will provide a horse for you."

The half-breed simply nodded his head, but did not speak.

Crockett caught Gilbert by the arm.

"Come along!" he cried; "let's saddle the animals and go for the painted serpents!"

The mustanger followed Crockett into the open air; there was a strange abstraction in his manner, like unto a man wandering in a maze.

"I can not understand it," he muttered, as he followed Crockett down the street.

"Jest as plain as the butt of my rifle," Crockett cried. "We're going to surprise the Comanches with a lot of sabers dangling at our heels, and row enough to scare all creation."

"No, I do not mean that. I mean the herdsman who brought the news."

"What of the yaller cuss?"

"His voice and face—both are strangely familiar to me."

"Wa-al, I didn't notice how he did talk, but now you speak of it, it seems to me that his figure-head isn't altogether strange to me," Crockett said, thoughtfully.

"I do not remember ever having seen him before, yet his face is familiar to me, and I'll swear that I have heard his voice before."

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets!" cried Crockett, suddenly. "I've got it! He's the very image of old Bandera."

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"We can encircle them, though, by approaching them from the east and thus drive them into the river. What

A SAD TRAGEDY.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

I lay on the bank of a crystal stream,
Lost in many a sweet day-dream,
Unconscious of all my earthly woes—
Including even the boil on my nose.
When, all of a sudden, I heard a cry
Out of the depths of the stream, near by.

I saw a Bass had a Minnow at bay,
Without any chance of getting away,
And the Minnow had raised a plaintive wail,
And heaved a sigh and turned very pale.
I knew it sighed, for bubbles came up
From its mouth, and floated away on the top.

The old Bass smacked his lips in glee;
The smiles ran over his face quite free;
And he winked his eye in a knowing way—
"A delicate lunch you will make to-day."
He said, with a laugh, "and by my ears,
I've a great respect for your tender years."

The Minnow said, growing yet more pale,
"I dearly wish I were now a whale,
A salted cod, or a herring dried,
For then I could stand being soaked and fried,
And eaten in a wicker way,
But to go down alive isn't fair, I say."

The old Bass scratched his head with his tail.
"Your talk, my friend, will not much avail;
If I desisted at every excuse,
I'd always go hungry than a goose,
And, hum! I if you know any prayers, please use 'em,
For I'm going to take you into my bosom."

"Don't try to run, you can't do that,
If you get away I'll eat my hat;
If I were like you, such a little stringer,
I wouldn't care the snap of my finger
What other nibbly people might do—
Such a very small fry in such a big stew!"

So wide he opened either jaw,
Made a dash as quick as you never saw,
Before the Minnow could utter an ah!
He found he'd been taken in raw—
Made a crashdash of, according to law—
And the Bass, whose hunger had ceased to gnaw,
Swam off, picking his teeth with a straw.

Little Suriya.

BY LAUNCE POYNTZ.

NO. I.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, three nations of Europe divided the empire of the sea between them—that empire which was finally to rest with one alone, till Columbia arose to dispute the palm with the victor of the three. These nations were England, Spain, and Portugal. Spain ruled the western seas, that swept from Florida to Cape Horn, so completely, that they passed under the name of the "Spanish Main." Portugal held undisputed sway in the Indian Ocean; and England kept the least inviting of the three, to all appearance—the North Atlantic from Hatteras to Cape Cod, making frequent piratical raids on the rich galleons of her more fortunate sisters, to compensate for her own poorer territory.

With the first two we have nothing to do in our story. It brings us to the then magnificent city of Goa, when the Portuguese were in the height of their glory. The occasion, a feast with the Maharajah of Goa, to welcome the arrival of the Portuguese ambassador, Don Manuel Almanza.

Don Manuel was a handsome cavalier, in the prime of life, accomplished in the Eastern tongues, and a welcome visitor to the languid and enervated Maharajah. They sat side by side in the royal box, gazing down into the white-sanded arena, fenced in with polished bamboo palisades, over twenty feet in height—and the cavalier's face, full of interest and excitement, was regarded with languid amusement by the blase Maharajah, who had seen spectacles to satiety.

Within the arena a strange scene was going on.

A short, sturdy Hindoo, of muscular frame and ferocious countenance, armed with a formidable whip, was showing off to the audience his complete mastery over the fiercest beast of the jungle, a fine royal tiger.

The beautiful, terrible creature was evidently loth to be handled, and growled terribly, showing his white fangs, as the tamer roughly seized him by the back of the neck, and compelled him to rear up against a post in the arena, leap over the whip, and perform various tricks, in which the Hindoo tamers are expert.

But every new feat required the cruel use of the whip to enforce it, and again and again did the blood start from the tiger's face, where the tamer always struck the beast. Almanza was interested, and yet apprehensive. It seemed to him, every moment, as if the fierce brute must turn and rend his keeper, who ruled him by simple terror.

He remarked as much to the Maharajah, who smiled.

"Oh! no, Don Manuel. Zadok knows his business well enough. But wait till you see little Suriya. She will be in very soon." She always concludes the act. *Boppery bop!* "How tired I am of that fellow!"

The obsequious prime minister obeyed his master's unspoken wish, and gave a secret signal. A door was opened at one side of the arena, and a slight, beautiful girl bounded in, at whose sight a thunder of applause echoed from the throng. Even the languid Maharajah sat upright for a moment, and clapped his hands with some enthusiasm, crying:

"Bravo! Suriya!"

Little Suriya was as pretty as a picture. Her bare arms were girt with gold bracelets at the wrists, and her slender form was clad in floating robes of snowy gauze. She bore no whip or other instrument of torture, but bounded forward as fearlessly as if the fierce tiger were a kitten, threw one arm around its brawny neck, and raised the other, as if to deprecate further punishment.

Almanza started and uttered an exclamation of wonder.

"Heavens! Maharajah. The fierce brute will tear her to pieces! The man can hardly control him, as it is!"

And involuntarily he sprang up, with his hand on his sword, as if he would defend her. The prince laughed.

"Boppery bop! How foolish you are! Look!"

Almanza looked and wondered.

The great tiger shrunk back behind the girl, as if in dread of the whip, and Zadok, the tamer, recoiled with a savage frown, and raised the weapon, as if to strike the girl.

Then the tiger started forward with a savage snarl, as if to protect the maiden, and received a furious blow between the eyes that drove it back again. Again it rushed on, as if determined on revenge, and again the tamer drove it back, but retreated himself.

So the strange act continued, till the trainer suddenly vanished through the con-

* Boppery bop! equivalent to bah!

cealed door, leaving the enraged tiger and the girl together in the arena.

The terrible beast was much excited. It dashed at the door again and again, while little Suriya retreated to the middle of the arena, and calmly waited. Presently the tiger seemed tired of useless assaults, and looked up at the people above with a snarl that showed all its white fangs; and then little Suriya called to it, in a gentle, coaxing voice.

To Almanza's intense surprise and admiration, the grim creature, that had been so furious under cruelty, became gentle as a lamb at the girl's voice, and walked up to Suriya, who patted the terrible head, as if unconscious of danger. The tiger arched its back, and walked round the girl, rubbing against her like a pleased kitten, and purring loudly.

The door of the arena was shaken, and immediately the beast growled angrily, and looked toward it, as if anxious to renew the fight with Zadok. But little Suriya deliberately boxed the creature's ears with her tiny hand, scolding it gently; and Almanza involuntarily shouted "Bravo!" with the rest, as the tiger lay down at her feet submissively, and licked her hand.

"By St. Peter!" ejaculated Don Manuel; "yonder is a wonderful girl! The tiger obeys like a dog!"

It was night, and the ambassador was returning from the feast in the palace, still thinking of the remarkable beauty and strange power of the tiger-tamer's daughter, as he had been told she was by the Maharajah. Don Manuel was thoughtfully proceeding to his own home, only followed by a couple of guards from the Maharajah, when he heard the sound of blows, proceeding from a hut by the roadside, mingled with cries of pain, in a female voice.

"Who lives there?" he asked, abruptly, of his guards.

"Zadok, the beast-tamer," said the man, in a frightened voice. "For the love of Vishnu, my lord, don't go near it! He keeps his beasts in cages in the back-yard, and some of them may be loose."

"That is no beast's voice," said Almanza, drawing his sword. "Were there a jungle

Suriya made no answer. Zadok rose, and went into the back-yard, where the tigers were caged. He was saluted with growls of dissatisfaction.

But Suriya heeded not that. She was used to it. She was thinking of Zadok's words—"vengeance in other ways."

What vengeance was he meditating?

(To be continued.)

Camp-Fire Yarns.

Getting rid of Grizzlies.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"THAT'S ENNY QUANTITY UV WAYS, LAD, TO CAPTIVATE YER BLACK OR YER BROWN B'AR, AN' THAT W'OUT MUCH TROUBLE, BUT WHEN YER COME TO ROPIN' IN OLE EPH, YER GOT TER TAKE THE CHANCE WHICH, ACCORDIN' TO THE WAY I CALKULATES, AN' JESS THER LEAST MITE IN FAVOR YER B'AR, SAY ABOUT THREE TO ONE."

So spoke my old friend Joe Logston, whom I had not seen for some time, he having been off amid the northern ranges, while I was still roaming the regions west of the Staked Plains.

"THAT'S AN' TWO OR THREE WAYS," HE CONTINUED, "BUT I TELL YOU THAR AIN' NONE UV 'EM SART'IN' CEPT THE BULLET, AN' YOU KNOW HOW OFTEN EVEN THAT FALLS WHEN AN OLE GRIZZLY AN' THE MARK."

"When I war a youngster, I used to hear 'em readin' outen a book about a lot uv fellers out hyar as throw'd more'n twenty ball, an' lefty ones, too, into Ole Eph's karkidge, an' never even waked him up fairly. Well, yer see, I didn't b'leave thet then, but, dum my cats ef I don't now, for I've ebenmost seen the like myself. But, I'll tell yer how me and Ned. Price fixed one uv the critters up in the Wasatch range, last year."

"We hed as purty a camp es ever a moun-tin man'd like to set eyes onto, an' war fixed real comfortable, an' would 'a' stayed thet away, ef it hedn't 'a' been fur a couple uv cussed grizzlies, a ole he an' she, an' the she war the biggest devil, thet would come nosin' round camp an' into ther ranch when we war gone, raisin' the very Ole

war mad 'cause the ole'oman wouldn't stay at home. Enny how, up they kem, an' we see 'em both es they crossed the highest place beyond whar the big karkidges showed up ag'in the dark clouds.

"Waugh! but they war whoppers, an' Ned hed nudged me w' his elbow an' sez as how we got to tackle 'em jess so."

"Thar fellers whar makes books sez as how it an' oftenly done. Why can't you an' me do it, too? he sez, larfin' quiet."

"In a minit we hear 'em at the buck's kark-edge, an' then sech a growlin' an' snarl'n' an' snappin' you never heard, I know."

"When they'd got to work, real yearnest like, Ned an' me crept up to the dead-fall an' peeked 'round."

"Thar they wur, both uv 'em, an' right squar' in the track uv whar war comin'."

"Ketch holt, Joe," whispers Ned.

"Let her went," sez I, grupp'n' the pole, an' then together we both kem down quick an' strong."

"The big dornick heaved backward an' forward on't er twic't, an' then, with a noise like a fallin' redwood, over she went."

"Twur a fine sight, lad, thet great rock skeetin' across the slope, leavin' a track uv fire behind, es broad es my arm's long, an' light'n' every thin', b'ars an' all, jess like day."

"But them b'ars warn't thar long to light up, nur fur nothin' else, nuther."

"I sw'ar thet rock jess swept them two critters over into the gully jess es easy es you'd knock a fly off'n the eend uv y'er nose."

"Lordy, whar a yell the varmints fetched es the dornick struck 'em, an' dum my cats ef Ole Eph hisself didn't keep on yellin' till he struck bottom, which time must 'a' been sumthin' like a quarter uv an hour, er meb- by a liddle less."

Short Stories from History.

Military System of the Middle Ages.—

The wars of the Italian republics during the middle ages were very inoffensive: and to us of the present day, who are accustomed to hear of the slaughter of forty or fifty



LITTLE SURIYA.

of tigers, they should not protect him in beating a woman! Stand by!"

And the cavalier advanced to the door, and threw it violently open.

The sight that met his gaze made him utter a curse. Zadok, the savage beast-tamer, stood in the middle of the room, with the same whip in his hands that he used on his tigers, but it was uplifted above the shrinking form of little Suriya.

The girl was on her knees, clinging to him, and crying:

"Oh! Zadok, spare me! I did not mean to do it! Indeed I did not."

"I'll teach you to keep him in better order," growled Zadok; and the whip was descending again, when Almanza sprang forward.

With a single blow from the pommel of his sword, Don Manuel felled Zadok to the earth, as Suriya leaped up and clung to him, sobbing and screaming together.

"Curses on thy cowardly head! Lay a finger on the girl again, and I'll run thee through the heart!" cried the cavalier, fiercely, as the brutal Zadok cowered on the floor.

"Dost know who I am, dog of a tamer?"

The tiger-tamer looked ferociously, but apprehensively, up at the indignant cavalier.

Zadok was politic, and knew the power of the ambassador. He assumed a whining tone.

"I meant no harm, your excellency," he said.

"The girl is lazy and careless, and I thought I had a right to punish her. She has lost Kuzbush, my finest performing tiger, and I was but correcting my own child."

"Believe him not. He is not my father," whispered little Suriya, in the cavalier's ear.

"I believe it," said Almanza, sternly.

"Hark ye, Zadok, this girl is not thy daughter; and mark my words, if she is ever hurt again, thy head shall answer for it to the Maharajah. Child, thou know'st me. If that man ever lays a hand on thee again, come to my palace, and thou shalt never suffer from him more."

Little Suriya still clung, trembling, to him. She evidently feared to be left alone with Zadok. Almanza turned, and whispered a sentence in her ear. The effect was immediate. She left him and stood back.

"I will obey, my lord," she said.

Then the ambassador addressed a parting word to Zadok.

"Be warned, my man. I know you, and you know me."

In another moment he was gone.

Zadok sat upon the floor, and fixed his malignant eyes on Suriya, when the retreating steps were no longer audible.

"Very good, my girl. You've found a protector; but if I may not strike you again, I can still have vengeance on thee in other ways. Let him beware, too. As great as he have died before this."

Strath' wi' our traps an' things, an' then slip off ag'in 'bout time me an' Ned ought to come in."

"We got tired uv this arter awhile, an' we determined to see ef ther' warn't no way, 'thout hev'n' a squar' stand-up fight fur it, uv nibbin' these two chaps out, an' pay 'em up fur ther deviltry."

"We confabed over it fur more'n a week, an' at last Ned sed as how he thought he could fetch 'em both at one haul."

"De yer remember that slantin' rock up yander, Joe, jess whar it slides down like into ther canyon? sez Ned."

"I know'd whar he meant. It war a wide, smooth rock, ten or fifteen foot across, an' it lay right along the edge—in fact, it wur the edge—uv the precipice thet wur five hundred deep ef it wur a inch, an' on t'other side from the gully the dornicks war all piled up in a heap like, an' one whoppin' big feller, nigh as big as this here shanty, layin' right on top uv the rest uv 'em."

It war what they calls on a balance, an' I'd oftenly thought as how a good strong push 'd send it bouncin' across the slopin' place into the gully below."

"I told Ned I know'd the spot, and then he sot to work tellin' me how we'd work Ole Eph and his gal."

"Bully," sed I, when Ned hed finished.

"Next mornin' we put fur a big valley below, an' by noon hed in a fine, large buck, which we toted up the moun'tin that very afternoon."

"Right plum on the edge uv the precipice whar the rock sloped, an' jess below the big dornick thet war on top t'others, we roped the buck down w' our lariats, tyin' onto p'int's uv the rock whar they poked out, an' the like, till we got him so fast that Ole Nick couldn't 'a' stirred him."

"Then we sot to work examin'n' the big dornick, an' jess es I thort, we could shove her off, w' the help uv a couple uv stout poles, quicker nor lightnin'."

"I tell you, lad, it made me larf, an' Ned, too, when we kem to think about the way ther grizzlies war a-goin' to git foolish."

"By night we hed up the poles, an' hed 'em all sot so thet the minit we'd b'ar down onto 'em, over the dornick'd go."

"Fur three nights, an' days, too, fur thet matter, Ned an' me lay clost by in a leetle cave, watchin' the trap. The fourth night kem on dark an' cloudy, an' by this time the buck war a-kickin' up the all-fired stinkin' over the neighborhood thet ever you see or smelt. The't whar we wanted, an' shore enuff, 'bout ten o'clock, Ned he tech-ed me up—you see I war nappin' my turn—an' whispers thet Ole Eph an' his gal war a-scrumblin' up the moun'tin."

"Yes, thar they war. I could hear 'em plain, an' Ole Eph hisself war a-growlin' an' a-grumblin' 'bout somethin' er other. Ned sed he war afeared thar wouldn't be enuff uv the buck fur both uv 'em, an' the ole man

thousand men in a single battle, they seem highly ridiculous. Thus, at the action of Zagonora, in 1423, only three persons lost their lives, and those by suffocation in the mud. At that of Molinella, in 1467, not one was killed; and in an action between the Neapolitan and Papal troops in 1486, and which lasted all day, there was not only no person killed, but it is not recorded that a single man was wounded; and in France, when Henry the First fought the battle of Brevenille in Normandy, he had but three persons killed."

This innocence of blood was partly owing to the defensive armor used by the Italian armies, which made war be conducted at very little personal hazard to the soldier; but still more to the rapacity of the companies of adventure, who, in expectation of enriching themselves by the ransoms of prisoners, were anxious to save their lives. Much of the humanity of modern warfare was due to this motive; but it was rendered more practicable by the nature of their arms. For once, and for once only, in the history of mankind, the art of defense had outstripped that of destruction. In a charge of lancers many fell, unhorsed by the shock, and might be suffocated or bruised to death by the pressure of their own armor; but the lancer's point could not penetrate the breast-plate; the sword fell harmless upon the helmet; the conqueror in the first impulse of passion could not assail any vital part of a prostrate but unexposed enemy. Still less was to be dreaded from the archers or crossbowmen who composed a large part of the infantry."

The bow was a peculiarly English weapon, and none of the other principal nations adopted it so generally or so successfully. The cross-bow, which brought the strong and the weak to a level, was more in favor on the continent. This instrument is said by some writers to have been introduced after the first crusade in the reign of Louis le Gros; but if we may trust William of Poitou, it was employed, as well as the longbow, at the battle of Hastings. Several of the Popes prohibited it as a treacherous weapon; and the restriction was so far regarded, that in the time of Philip Augustus, its use is said to have been unknown in France. By degrees, it became more general, and crossbowmen were considered as a very necessary part of a well-organized army. But both the arrow and the quarrel glanced away from plate armor, such as it became in the fifteenth century, impervious in every part, except when the vizor was raised from the face, or some part of the body accidentally exposed."

Many disadvantages attended the security against wounds for which this armor had been devised; the enormous weight exhausted the force and crippled the limbs. It rendered the heat of a southern climate insupportable; and in some cases it increased

the danger of death, as in the passage of a river or morass. It was impossible to compel an enemy to fight, because the least intrenchment or natural obstacle could stop such unwieldy assailants. The troops might be kept in constant alarm at night, either compelled to sleep under arms, or run the risk of being surprised before they could rivet their plates of steel. Neither the Italians, however, nor the Transalpines, would surrender a mode of defense which they ought to have deemed inglorious; but in order to obviate some of its military inconveniences, it became usual for the cavalry to dismount, and leaving their horses at some distance, to combat on foot with the lance. This practice, which must have been singularly embarrassing with the plate armor of the fifteenth century, was introduced before it became so ponderous.

The invention of gunpowder, and its use in war, rendered wars more destructive than those of the Italians; but certainly less so than when the pike, the battle-ax and the bow were the only weapons in use, and men were unincumbered with the defensive armor of the Italians. It was in the first part of the fourteenth century that cannon, or rather mortars, were invented, and the applicability of gunpowder to their great master, Zisca; and the Swiss, who, after winning their independence, inch by inch, from the house of Austria, had lately established their renown by a splendid victory over Charles of Burgundy; and although their foot and infantry were not decidedly established until the Milanese wars of Louis XII. and Francis I. in the sixteenth century, yet the last years of the middle age indicated the commencement of that military revolution in the general employment of pikemen and musketeers.

The Mocking-Bird.—The intelligence (says Wilson) which the American mocking-bird displays in listening to, and laying up lessons, from almost every species of the feathered creation within his hearing, is really surprising, and marks the peculiarity of his genius. He possesses a voice full, strong and musical, and capable of almost every modulation, from the clear, mellow notes of the wood thrush to the savage scream of the bald eagle. In the measure and accent, he faithfully follows his originals. In force and sweetness of expression, he greatly improves upon them. In his native groves, mounted on the top of a tall bush or half-grown tree, in the dawn of a dewy morning, while the woods are already vocal with a multitude of warblers, his admirable song rises pre-eminent over every competitor. Neither is this strain altogether imitative. His own native notes, which are easily distinguishable, are bold and full, and varied seemingly beyond all limits. They consist of short expressions of two, three, or, at most, five or six syllables, generally interspersed with imitations, and all of them uttered with great emphasis and rapidity, and continued with undiminished ardor. The buoyant gaiety of his action arresting the eye, as his song most irresistibly does the ear, he sweeps round with an enthusiastic ecstasy; he mounts and descends as his song swells, or dies away; and, as it has been beautifully expressed, "he bounds aloft with the celerity of an arrow, as if to recover or recall his very soul, expired in the last elevated strain." While exerting himself, a bystander, destitute of sight, would suppose that the whole feathered tribe had assembled together on a trial of skill, each striving to produce his utmost effort, so perfect are his imitations. He many times deceives the sportsman, and sends him in search of birds that, perhaps, are not within miles of him, but whose notes he exactly imitates: even birds themselves are frequently imposed on by this admirable mimic, and are deceived by the fancied calls of their mate, or dive with precipitation into the depth of the thickets, at the scream of what they suppose to be the sparrow-hawk.

The mocking-bird loses little of the power and energy of his song by confinement. In his domesticated state, when he commences his career of song, it is impossible to stand by uninterested. He whistles for the dog; Cæsar starts up, wags his tail, and runs to meet his master. He squeaks out like a hurt chicken, and the hen hurries about with hanging wings and bristled feathers, clucking to protect her injured brood. The barking of the dog, the mewling of the cat, the creaking of a passing wheelbarrow, follow with great truth and rapidity. He repeats the tune taught him by his master, though of considerable length, fully and faithfully. He runs over the quiverings of the canary, and the clear whistlings of the Virginia nightingale, or red-bird, with such superior execution and effect, that the mortified songsters feel their own inferiority, and become altogether silent, while he seems to triumph in their defeat by redoubling his exertions.

This excessive fondness for variety, however, in the opinion of some, injures his song. His elevated imitations of the brown thrush are frequently interrupted by the crowing of cocks; and the warblings of the blue-bird, which he exquisitely manages, are mingled with the screaming of swallows, or the cackling of hens; amidst the simple melody of the robin, we are suddenly surprised by the shrill reiterated notes of the whippoorwill; while the notes of the killdeer, blue jay, martin, and many others, succeed with such imposing reality, that we look round for the originals, and, in discovery, with astonishment, that the performer in this singular concert is the admirable bird now before us. During this exhibition of his powers, he spreads his wings, expands his tail, and throws himself round the cage in all the ecstasy of enthusiasm, seeming not only to sing, but to dance, keeping time to the measure of his music. Both in his native and domestic state, during the solemn stillness of night, as soon as the moon rises in silent majesty, he begins his delightful solo; and serenades us the live-long night with a full display of his vocal powers, making the whole neighborhood ring with his inimitable melody.

In his purse, in his drink, in his anger shall a man be known.